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Beautiful Mind Arc

Act-1
Assassin meets Manaka————!
A certain day in February, 1991.
At the corner of the warehouse district in Minato Ward, Tokyo.
???; "Fill. Fill. Fill. Fill. Fill.
Repeat five times.
But when each is filled, destroy it———"
The man's words loudly resound.
It is a chant.
Originally, a group of words to guide miracles that could not be achieved even with the inner secrets of magecraft.
Then is the man a believer of miracles? No. Like many of the mages in the twentieth century, the
man was also a shrewd realist. Only those who exercise unusual mysteries need a cold gaze to stare
at the world as it is.
If he dares to express it, then yes, it is possible. But what backs up the man's chanting?
At least, it was just enough for the man to be convinced.
In other words————
It is the Holy Grail.
Yes, the holy cup.
Is it the cup that the messiah and his apostles used during the Last Supper?
Is it the holy relic that was pursued by those medieval knights?
Or is it the "ancient" cauldron that was said to be its original ¹ ?
The details are unclear. The people from the Mages Association who mediated the story didn't say
anything to the like, and even the priests from the Holy Church who brought the request to the
association in the first place didn't inform them of its history, even if they knew where the cup was

There was only one thing he was certain of.

brought in from.

¹ Original: Archetype

The Holy Grail that the priest from the Church showed him just once——————	-was
the real deal.	

The man clearly remembers even now, that moment, when he was captivated and overwhelmed by ir.

Its majestic presence.

A brilliance reminiscent of an accumulation of mysteries.

And above all else, that tremendous amount of mana.

It even gave him the delusion of his whole magic circuits getting excited. The true form of the Holy Grail that the man saw and felt, was an existence equivalent to the legendary dragon race that continues to endlessly generate mana just by breathing.

What's more, what the man saw was nothing more than Symbol2.

It is said that the amount of mana in the Saint Graph³ which is hidden somewhere in Tokyo, a city located at the end of the Far East, far surpasses even the Lesser Grail's and makes almost every impossibility possible.

In a word, yes. Is it an omnipotent wish granting device-

While concentrating on his chant, a memory revives in the corner of the man's consciousness. The priest was speaking.

"On the dawn of the Holy Grail's activation, your wish will surely be fulfilled."

Man: "My will creates your body"

The ultimate magecraft, the Root.

It is possible to reach the long-cherished wish and even greatest ambition of all mages.

Man: "And your sword creates my destiny"

Therefore.

First, he must summon a virtuous soul using the power of the immense Lesser Grail. The number is seven. The number designated by the Holy Grail.

Man: "If you heed the Grail's call and obey my will and reason, then answer me."

² Symbol: Lesser Grai

³ Saint Graph: Greater Grail

Not just anyone can do it. Only the seven Masters chosen by the Holy Grail can summon the Seven Servants who are virtuous souls. Heroic Spirit Summoning. Truly, an unattainable miracle. An impossible mystery. In order to participate in the battle royale, in order to become the last Servant and Master pair and obtain the right to use the Greater Grail, he is trying to subordinate----————a Heroic Spirit, a being that is unreachable by a human magus as a Servant. Man: "I hereby swear. That I shall be all the good in the world, That I shall defeat all evil in the world." A reverberating spell. A magic ritual that cannot be achieved. A magic circle drawn on the floor that should not be activated. Man: "Thou Seventh Heaven clad in the three great words of power Come forth from the circle of binding, Guardian of the Scales-However. Ah, behold. Now, the light of mana is being emitted from the magic circle. Now, the shapeless spirit entity is obtaining a tentative body through ether. Sure enough, the impossible summoning proved possible here. Before the man who had finished weaving his spell, such materialisation was achieved. It was likely one of the first ever Servants summoned in perfect form through human means. Its class is Assassin. A figure that suited the darkness. It wore a skull mask.



-And, it had the figure of a young vivacious woman.



Servant Assassin.

A Heroic Spirit summoned into the class of "Assassin" who excel at infiltration, reconnaissance and manoeuvring.

They boast a high degree of agility, but do not have high performance in their other parameters.

First of all, if you face enemies like Saber, Lancer and Archer—the three knight classes directly, then it will not end well.

Naturally, the tactics you can adopt are limited to surprise attacks.

However, Assassin in a surprise attack exerts terrifying ability.

It is the "Presence Concealment" skill that makes it possible.

As a prerequisite, Servants basically possess a high sensing ability.

If there is a magical reaction, a Master can also detect them, but there are many cases where a Heroic Spirit's sensing ability exceeds that of their Master. It is possible for them to sense not only mana but presences unique to a Servant.

However, Assassin's "Presence Concealment" negates their sensing ability.

Please note that this is different from the disappearance of a presence due to spiritualization.

With this skill, Assassin will launch surprise attacks at will while maintaining their body.

To sum it up in one word, it is a miracle.

It is very difficult to respond and deal with them.

A Servant who is supernatural and equal to a reproduction of a myth will sometimes be able to respond to a sudden surprise attack. But, what about the Master themselves?

Although their attack and defence performance is not as good as the three knights, a Heroic Spirit is a Heroic Spirit.

But a Magus cannot hope to defeat Assassin.

In an attack that targets the Master. Know that Assassin is the strongest.

On record, the Assassin in the First Holy Grail War slaughtered three Masters. This is a strict fact.

If you are worried about Assassin, then you must always wait for your Servant.

However, that is also a bad move overall----

Fear Assassin.

It can be one of the most powerful Heroic Spirits if used correctly.

(An excerpt from an old notebook)



It's the best-

The man who successfully summoned a Heroic Spirit which should've been the first in history, described this moment as such deep down.

It's no wonder he was screaming cheers without knowing it.

The history of the Jinga family which was his own family is not futile, and in the Far East which is regarded as the next generation in the world of magecraft, have acquired the strong feeling that the accumulation of hundreds of years of history was meaningful in itself.

Man· "Haha "

The man laughs.

Man: "Hahaha."

The man laughs.

After that, he cheered loudly.

With the same or more excitement as his earlier spell.

Man: "I did it, I did it!!"

How long did he continue applauding himself?

A few seconds, a few minutes? It shouldn't have been more than ten minutes, but the man at that time was completely out of touch. Despite correctly recognising that the achievement of the first-ever Heroic Spirit summoning was due to the Grail's own power, it was such a great joy to him.

Man: "......I did it!"

In the Far East, he was born and raised in a family lineage, that was relatively old and suitable enough to be called a prestigious family.

In his twenties, he inherited the position of family head from his predecessor along with their magic crest, and although it was a request from the Holy Church, he was a magus who held the skill to be selected for a city-wide magecraft ritual that was equal to sponsorship from the Mages Association, the centre of the magecraft world.

He was not always happy with his ancestry and his twenty-odd years of life.

Although they're a prestigious family, it is only relative.

Their scale is different from that of the genuine one like the Reiroukan family and their influence on public society is small.

While studying alchemy, the magic of his family, and inheiriting the magic crest, the man called Jinga was always irritated and thirsty. Is this right? Will he, like his father and grandfather, just live dreaming that his future descendants will obtain their ambition at the end of their diligent studies and inheritance?

No.

He was different. He was chosen.

What he felt so far, must have been no more than impatience, craving, no————ambition.

He didn't know the history of the Grail brought into Tokyo.

And its not as if he swallowed the slogans, "The activation of the Greater Grail is proof of a miracle," "Therefore, we will demonstrate its miracle with the cooperation of you mages," "We will not thwart you from achieving your long-cherished wish by using the omnipotence of the grail," solemly spoken by the bunch from the Church, but he got on board anyway.

The attitude of the Mages Association messenger was unforgettable.

Courteous, but rude. Did the Clocktower see the magecraft ritual in the Far East, the Holy Grail War, as a poor-planned approach to reaching the Root or something to be recorded just in case?

The truth is unknown, but it was clear that they despised him, the man called Seiji Jinga. However. But.

Seiji: "Hahaha. A Heroic Spirit.....no, it showed itself to me as a Servant! To me of all people! I was able to put a legend, an embodiment of mysteries into a frame, as one of my familiars!"

Surely and steadily.

He took a step towards the Greater Grail.

He hadn't receive notification from the Holy Church that other magi had successfully summoned their Heroic Spirits.

Then, as he suspects. He's the first in history. He was probably the only one in the world who was the first to perform a perfect Heroic Spirit summoning.

Seiji: "I will! I will do it!"

His determination. Overflows from his lips with his excitement.

A shout of cheers.

His voice shakes the dark warehouse.

Inside the warehouse where all the inner cargo was emptied and abandoned, except for Jinga, there was only the newly summoned Assassin now. He had no collaborators. And he never called any magi who were close to his family to Tokyo as his force.

Jinga recognized that the true nature of the Holy Grail War was a solitary battle. 'A struggle I should do all by myself.'

That is why, he has already poured in all of his family fortune. He needn't worry abou how much he shouted inside the warehouse. He purchased all the cargo inside the surrounding warehouses, and modified them into his own magic workshop. This area of the Minato Ward Warehouse District is now the territory of Seiji Jinga.

If a magus steps into it, he'll kill them.

Even if a Heroic Spirit comes to attack them, he'll turn the tables on them.

With himself and this woman.

Seiji: "......A Servant."

Eventually, he recognises her.

His partner who is magically bound to him through the summoning.

A Heroic Spirit who achieved materialisation, and the Servant who is the key to the Holy Grail

War and his greatest fighting strength—————

—————It had the form of a young woman.

The moment he realized that.

Sudden emotions passed through Jinga's mind.

Heroic Spirits are extremely powerful beings. Far surpassing human wisdom, myths and legends reappear, and freely exercise their mysteries as if it were child's play such as those exercised by magi. Therefore, even if it was a young girl.

She can't just be a woman.

Seiji: (A woman....)

Yes, he thought.

His heart was pounding.

The core of his body became hot.

It was a reaction he had no knowledge of after living for more than twenty years.

Or maybe he wouldn't have had reacted at that moment, if hadn't actually had the best excitement in his life with the fact that he had summoned a Heroic Spirit. Perhaps he could afford to calmly observe the woman as the embodiment of a paranormal mystery.

But, that didn't come to pass.

He was interested in her.

To put it bluntly, yes, he desired her.

For her youthfully tense body.

Seiji: (Her age.....is she in her mid teens, late teens.....or......)

He was head over heels.

For the woman's young and supple figure.

For her well-proportinate brown limbs.

For her body that was covered by a perfectly thin black robe.

He didn't see if she was trained for battle, but he was fascinated by the woman's body which was filled with intentional femininity.

Sadly, he wasn't one to touch the sword and risk his life with a blade.

Seiji: "......You......you're, my Servant, right?"

Seiji Jinga doesn't notice.

That this woman is an unmistakable warrior.

Her body. Her black thin silk. They were nothing more than a woman's weapons.

Seiji: "You answered my summons.....you came.....in order to grant my wish.....right?"

Assassin: "Yes."

It was a voice as if she was enduring something, like she was suppressing something. It was a woman's voice.

Jinga, recognised that the woman was also lustful.

Seiji: "Then, you acknowledge me as your Master.....yes?"
Assassin: "Yes."

It was a quiet obedient voice, as if it was enduring something.

It was the woman's voice.

Jinga realized that the woman was waiting for him.

Seiji: "I like to know your name. Tell me."

Assassin: "My name, so you don't know it?"

It was a terribly calm voice that seemed to realize something.

It was the woman's voice.

Her facial expression was covered by a white mask, so he couldn't peek at it.

It hid from her eyes to her nose. However, given the contours of her face and her well-shaped lips, he couldn't help feeling certain she had a beautiful face. Jinga imagined the woman smiling seductively behind the mask.

Assassin: "I am the one who was led to the class and name of Assassin."

Seiji: "I see....."

He nods while loosening his collar.

The woman is seeking him.

Then, he must respond in kind.

Assassin: "I am the one who kills all life."

Seiji: "I see...."

He approached the woman step by step and nods.

The woman is anxious.

If she is, then he must comfort her.

Assassin: "I am one who can only kill. Even so, is it okay.....if I serve you?"

Seiji: "Of course."

He whispers, while reaching for the woman's cheek.

The woman is at a loss.

Then he must guide her.

He had met her. His destined partner. So, what else is there?

Seiji Jinga steps into her space without any doubts. He doesn't realize that he is the one who does what he wants, without any hesitation or worry. Despite his magical mental defenses, despite being inside his own magic workshop which was his own territory, he does so.

Is it due to his Servant's skill?

No. It's not that.

It is something not recognisable to the Master. It cannot be understood just by grasping the form of the "Servant" that imprisons a Heroic Spirit as a magical being composed of parameters and skills, which accompanies the summoning backed by the enormous mana of the Lesser Grail. —It's because she is what she is. Assassin: "Well then, Master. I dedicate all of myself to you. My name, as well as my Noble Phantasm too." It can be called a habit. The woman ------Assassin holds the man's stretched hand. Before she touches his cheek. After that, she turns over his palm. Jinga whose body balance had crumbled falls on his back, but just before that, she gently hugs him. As a result, he was held by her from above when she propped her knee on the floor. Seiji: "Hey" Faster than he could say, "What're you doing!?" The woman cuddled close to him. Beyond his gaze — — — there was the woman's face directly above Jinga. The woman's fingers touches his cheek and his casually stretched black hair. 'Aah. I want this woman. No, she's been mine since the moment I summoned her.' 'We walk together for the sake of our ambition.' 'What is my ambition? No, I just want to kiss her now.' Yes, he thought. In that moment. Their lips overlap.

It was a first for him.

It's not like he had zero relationships with the opposite sex, but even so, he can assure that he had never tasted this before. The organ for vocalisation, his mouth, his tongue, was plugged up, so he moaned with his throat instead. It was a sweet moan.

She had soft lips.

It was a hot kiss.



He quickly became intoxicated————
Everything becomes hazy. His consciousness and thoughts become dull.
His ambition. Long-cherished wish. Family lineage.
Mages Association. The Holy Church.
Holy Grail. Greater Grail. Lesser Grail.
Heroic Spirit. The summoning. Ability. Noble Phantasm.
Something is terribly weighing on his mind, but he didn't think anything more on it.
A hot, soft, sweetly melting pleasure amply permeates his brain through his lips and tongue
———————And with that, Seiji Jinga ended his more than twenty year life.
Assassin: "My true name is Hassan-i-Sabbah. My Noble Phantasm is Zabaniya ⁴ ."

With a sigh. The woman slips out words.

Their lips were already separated.

As the woman lets go of him, Jinga's body which had completely lost the heat of life softly collapses to the floor.

Assassin: "All of me is a lump of poison."

Her nails, skin, body, body fluids. Everything is poisonous.

Everything is a blade.

Everything is death.

It was the true identity of the woman with the name of Hassan.

A poison in the shape of a woman.

A woman who was completed as a poison.

A flower of assassination that recreated the "Poison Damsel" in long ago Indian myths.

Even her high-quality perfume like body odor, even her sighs, are poisonous.

Even her fresh and lustrous skin, even her body, is poisonous.

In particular, the poison in her mucus is too strong. No matter how much talismans and magecraft a human magus protects themself with, if she touches them once, there is no way out of the consequences. Even if they are a Heroic Spirit, if they receive the death kiss twice, they will meet the same end.

-

⁴ Zabaniya: Delusional Poison Body

In other words————
Assassin: "Meaning death."
The woman was a warrior.
To be exact, one who continues to take lives in the darkness.
As determined, and as ordered.
Following her own way.
Assassin: ""
As she states at her Master who has collapsed like a marionette with its strings cut, the wom

As she stares at her Master who has collapsed like a marionette with its strings cut, the woman exhales.

Deeply, deeply. Heartbreakingly.

If there were living things around, then her poisonous breath would've stopped their movements. After doing so for a few seconds.

The woman leans over her Master's corpse.

Once more, she brings her lips down to his lips which had started to get cold-

Assassin: "......It wasn't you....."

At a distance of touching or not touching.

She briefly said.



As explained before----

They cannot exist without mana. That is, they cannot exist without a Master.

Strictly speaking, the mana used for materialising and summoning Servants is the Holy Grail---The Lesser Grail will perform it.

The Grail makes the impossible possible.

This can be thought of as proof that the Greater Grail is an omnipotent wish-granting device.

However

The Servant's physical maintenance after being summoned, and other sequential consumption due to combat actions etc.

The Master will be in charge of all of these mana activities.

Speaking further----

The Master becomes "a custodian to this world" for the Servant.

The summoned Heroic Spirit remains in the world with their Master who is a human of that age as a keystone.

After all, they cannot exist without a Master.

Then, what if they lose their Master? Many disappear immediately, depending on the original nature of the Heroic Soirit.

When the Master is lost, the Servant loses their custodian and vanishes from the world.

If they have the Independent Action skill, they can maintain their bodies for one to several days, but the Independent Action Skill is the special characteristic of the Archer class, and does not apply to Servants from other classs.

However, exceptions do exist.

It is possible for a Heroic Spirit who has performed suitable deeds of long-term solo infiltration in their anecdotes, myths and legends, to possess the Independent Action Skill regardless of their class.

Therefore, you should never let your guard down even after killing a Master.

Further exceptions are----

By consuming a large amount of mana, they can supress the dispersal and maintain their bodies.

One example is the replenishment and maintenance of mana by "feeding" on souls, which was described earlier.

As mentioned earlier, "feeding" on souls is not expressly forbidden for us magi.

However, if it is done excessively, it will easily lead to the leakage of mysteries.

When the exception of exceptions occurs——there is no other choice but to take appropriate action promptly.

(An excerpt from an old notebook)



What am I doing?

I upon materialisation with my mind as myself.

What did I do before this unlikely event?

No.

No.

What are you doing, me?

I who had materialised was certainly myself.

Different from my lifetime, yet the same as my lifetime, a poisonous flower, the Poison Damsel. The Hassan of the Serenity.

There is a man in front of me.

The man, like many of the men who I've met in my lifetime, sought me.

I touched him as I was -----

And killed him. Again.

I killed him.

Because I thought 'this time for sure.'

That is my wish.

That is the height of my shallowness.

My one wish that was a poison, killing all those who snuggle up to me.

Even if they touch me—————

Someone who doesn't die, doesn't collapse, and smiles at me.

Was I hasty? Even before obtaining the grail, if this person could, or.....

Perhaps.

Am I going mad?

There shouldn't be any creature who can touch me and keep their life.

Even if they were a tough Phantasmal Species, I'd kill it, Now, even more than in my lifetime, my body is poisonous. My Noble Phantasm. My way of being has now been sublimated into a form as a Heroic Spirit.

Thus, I cannot fulfill my wish.

I cannot obtain the Grail anymore because I killed him, my Master.

I already have no choice but to wait till I disappear.

I will disappear into the mist and send the memory of my foolishness and regrets to the throne.

Even though I have no choice, but to disappear—————
I can't stop myself.
I don't want to disappear.
I don't want to die.
I haven't given up yet.
Innocent people ————
I kill the people who live in this Far-Eastern city. I kill. And I kill.
I touch the man who sees me and approaches me. I touch him. And kill him.
One day. Two days.
It's already been three days.
While murdering people, I maintain my temporary body.
While devouring souls, I maintain my tentative life.
There should be no hope anymore.
I'm thirsty, while seeking something.
I hunger, while wishing for something.
Is it mana?
Is it food to keep myself in this current world?
No.
No.
It's not something.
More like I'm definitely seeking someone.
I will keep killing them. Tonight too.
I will keep standing on the street corner. Tonight too.
I will change my figure with my ability—————at best, only my clothes.
In the crowd, men with tired faces call out to me.
I smile.
I'll do my best. While hiding slight emotions, I hope that the men I kill from now on are at least
dreamy until their final moments.
But, ahh.
I wonder why————
The men say.
"Oh, you're lonely, ain'tcha?"

—————It was a rumour.
Assassin: "No, I'm not."
————Of a foreign girl who gently calls out to adults.
Assassin: "I'm not lonely at all."
—————It was night.
Assassin: "But"
—————The girl appears in the city late at night.
Assassin: "I'm sad."
It was death.
Assassin: "So, I can't laugh."
——————————————————————————————————————
Assassin: "Will you comfort me?"
Like that.
While responding to the men's voices as quietly as possible.
I will touch them tonight as well.
I will kill them tonight as well.
One. Two.
After touching, kissing and killing the fifth man in a small hotel room———————————————————————————————————
I will head to the front of the station again.
I feel like I'm gradually getting to know the nights in Tokyo.
To be more exact, about the habits of the Tokyo men who approach me.
They are very tired and frustrated by something.

They see me standing alone in the night crowd, and call out to me.

There are all sorts of men.
Men who worry about me being by myself.
Men who really seem to be trying to console me.
Men who do not hide their lust.
There are also groups.
Dangerous ones———by human standards, even dangerous lightly armed men
I touch everyone.
My only criterion is whether or not they called out to me.
Now, off to the station.
On the outskirts of Ikebukuro station, Ikebukuro, Toshima Ward, Tokyo. This area is very
crowded and nice.
Especially the area around the station's north exit is good.
There are many men on their way home because the residential area is close by.
Moreover, yeah
There are so many hotels.
As soon as I get a call, I go up to a room somewhere.
But. If I do that too many times
I'll be surrounded by armed people.
When it becomes a fuss, I'll kill even the people who don't intend to talk to me.
Therefore, I have to avoid trouble as much as possible.
I may be going mad, but I want to stick to the rules I've set for myself.
I'll stop standing near the north exit in succession.
Let's go to the east exit.
Yes, I think—————
But I'll change my mind depending on whether or not there's a Servant there.
I sense it. Two presences. Two Heroic Spirits are clashing right near Ikebukuro station now.
From the direction and distance, they're probably near the Sunshine 60 building,
Run away
Yes, I should have thought.
I can't participate in the Holy Grail War anymore anyway.
But if those who don't know it notice my existence, I'll be killed.

That's why, I have no choice but to flee.

I jump into the dark back alley, while completely blocking my presence.

Straight away, I land on the rooftop of a multi-tenant building.

I'll leap over the building's rooftops one by one, and leave Ikebukuro for now.

I can't afford to get dragged into a battle between Servants.
I don't want to die.
I still want to live.
I don't want to give up yet.
That's why, I will live, live, live.
I will survive————
???: "Oh my?"
There was a voice. It sounds like a small bell.
???: "You're a strange one. Nuh-uh, I don't know many Servants though."
—————Destiny stood there.
???: "You're Assassin, right?"
——————————————————————————————————————
Girl: "Eh, I see."
In other words, a girl who is omnipotent. Or is omnipotence like the girl?
Girl: "You"
Smiling in the moonlit sky, she looks like Potnia Theron.
Girl: "You don't have a Master, do you? Well then"
The girl's pure white hands.
While bathing in the starlight and moonlight.
Shining, dazzling, as they are———————were touching my brown skin.



Beautiful Mind Arc

Act-2

1100 2	
What lies ahead for the mad knight and the ordinary boy———————————————————————————————————	2
Noon on a certain day in February, 1991.	
Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo	

Near the east exit of JR Shinjuku station. In front of the Alta, as it is commonly called.

Although he had a cold sweat when he saw the police box on the right-hand side immediately after leaving the station, it seemed Tatsumi Kitano's worries would somehow end as a needless concern. Whether it's because of the place called Shinjuku, or because it was noon, the area around the east exit is full of people even though it was a genuine weekday.

A crowd in Shinjuku. Basically, it seems there were many men and women around the age of twenty, but to be honest, Tatsumi wasn't good at guessing the ages of others. Even last night, he made a big mistake in his new friend's age. However, there are many men who are as old as him, perhaps like college students.

If it's like this, perhaps he and his -----new friend will not stand out.

Though he is a foreigner with a slender and cool impression, and although there is no doubt that high-pitched cheers of female students will fly if he is taken to a classroom, for some reason, he has a calm look and is well-familiar with the crowd.

He looks natural to be there.

He, who suddenly looked up at the huge Altavision and quietly walked, while nodding, "Heh...." Surely. He is getting familiar with it.

Even so, he has a neat appearance and his kind and gentle green eyes.

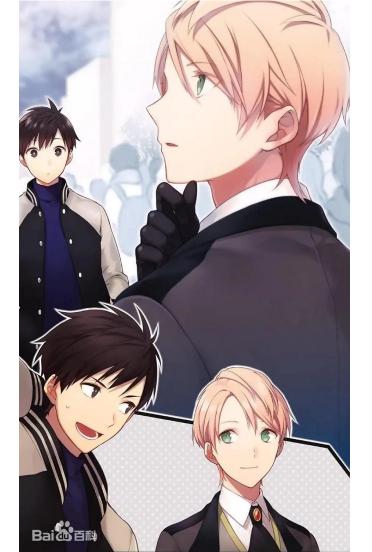
If they notice him even once, their eyes will stop. See, even now, young women who are passing next to him are making an expression that says, "If you don't have any plans, I'm always looking," but regrettably for them, they were walking beside the JR railway tracks where hand-drawn movie signboards were lined up on the wall in the direction of West Shinjuku.

Berserker: "Even if you think you understand it in your head, it's still surprising."

Oops. He is saying something.

Stopping chasing women with his vague gaze, Tatsumi turns to him.

Tatsumi: "Oh, yeah. That's true. Foreigners are eye-catching after all."
Berserker: "I'm talking about this Altavision."



This is bad.

It was a totally strange exchange.

His maternal grandmother often told him to "listen to people in a calm manner."

Tatsumi: "Guess so, you didn't have street vision in your time. You didn't have TV yet, right?

.....Huh, but don't you all have knowledge of the modern era?"

Berserker: "I told you, even if you think you understand it.....?"

Tatsumi: "Oh. My bad."

Crap, he did it again.

It completely slipped out.

Tatsumi bows while cursing his own bad habits.

Berserker: "Don't worry, Tatsumi. It's true it's a confusing feeling."

Tatsumi: "My bad, really.So, umm, how is it? Shinjuku. As you said, we came to a place full of people."

Berserker: "Yeah. I saw something good. Some things look different, but the people hasn't changed."

Tatsumi: "Hmm?"

What is he saying-

Even though he can only see him as the same age as himself, or at most twenty years old.

This new friend makes really strange statements.

But that's not surprising.

Because, he is.....

Berserker: "Thank you for bringing me along, Master."

He isn't a human being.

He isn't a person who lives in the present era.

After all, he is a Servant————who was summoned by Tatsumi Kitano.



About a Servant's knowledge.

As mentioned earlier, the Holy Grail automatically bestows Servants a set of prerequisite knowledge from the moment they are summoned, to see what a Holy Grail War is like. In fact, they materialize because of their Master.

Seven Servants and Seven Masters. 3 strokes of a Command Seal.

If you obtain the Grail and become the last Servant and Master, your wish will come true.

Their original state is different, and they are sometimes summoned as a magical being consisting of parameters, skills and classes. In addition, even the disposition that allows Servants to sense the unique presence of each other——

They comprehend the rules of the Holy Grail War which they themselves are part of.

Even in the unlikely event, there is some problem on the Master's side, like they obtain a Command Seal and they summon a Heroic Spirit by accident, without having most or all of the prerequisite knowledge, a Servant will be able to accurately understand the situation, and be able to tell their Master what the Holy Grail War is.

On the other hand----

Heroic Spirits are also bestowed with knowledge of the current era by the Holy Grail.

They are automatically given the language and general knowledge of Tokyo, where the Holy Grail War will be held. Thus, a Magus does not need to study and investigate the mother language of a foreign hero.

Nor exercise magecraft that allows simultaneous translation.

Servants handle Japanese which is relatively difficult to learn like their mother language.

According to the Overseer, this is an effect for the smooth progress of the Holy Grail War.

By doing so, the Heroic Spirits will continue to fight for the sake of their goals without being confused and comparing it to their lifetime, even if they see or hear modern aspects.

But, bear in mind.

Even if they are already in a state of "awareness," it is not experience.

There is a good chance that the servant will be very interested in something modern.

Understand the nature of your Heroic Spirit.
Never separate their consciousness from the Holy Grail War.

(An excerpt from an old notebook)



Tatsumi Kitano was an ordinary young man.

A second-year high school student attending a metropolitan high school in Setagaya when he was about to change from a boy to a young man.

His grades were average.

He was average in sports too.

The girl he likes is a classmate who sits next to him and smiles at him once every three days.

His hobbies were bird watching and reading.

Yes, he was confident in reading books as they were, even if it did not reflect in his grades.

However, he didn't know the truth of the world.

Everything was average.

He didn't excel at anything.

At best, he was good at photographing and observing animals, as the animals caught behind the viewfinder of his single-lens reflex camera and binoculars happened to stop moving for a strangely long time.

However on a certain day in February, 1991
Two days ago, counting from that moment he was walking with him is
Shinjuku

He did something unusual.

Or rather, it found him.

He had seen that his standard scores was just in the middle of the printout with the results of the nationwide mock test written on it, and realized that he was not a very special person. When a box of mementos, some keepsakes of his maternal grandfather who died at the end of last year, were sent to him from his parents place.

Yes, the only difference from his classmates, was that Tatsumi had been living alone since Spring in a small apartment in Setagaya. His mother and little sister went with his father who decided to transfer to the countryside for some reason about the impact of the economic bubble burst, and only he remained in Tokyo to prepare for exams.

He didn't expect anything special from the sent items.

He didn't expect such things like proof he was the descendent of a great person whose name appeared in Japanese history textbooks, or a work of art that could be ridiculously expensive. If it was a few years ago when he was indulging in anime and manga which he had completely graduated from now, he might have dreamed of—————inheriting something like a gem or a sword from a myth or legend, and that it would trigger the beginning of his days of dizzving adventures.

An old photo. An old book. An old fountain pen that's out of ink, and something like a journal that describes the time when he was serving in World War II. One by one, he checked out the small items left by his grandfather while reminiscing on his memories.

Tatsumi: "What's this?"

A black notebook that is different from the notebook in which the days of harsh wars were indifferently spelled out.

There was a strange list of letters there.

Maybe it's because he liked to read some occult books that made him think like it was some spell. Or, maybe it was a hereditary trait he has in his body now that he thinks about it. In any case, Tatsumi read out the long passage aloud.

Even though there is no magic circle.

The words did serve as magecraft.

He saw a light. Although Tatsumi thought for a moment that the coherent light he saw on a special feature on nuclear technology in a science magazine which was different from an electric lamp, flame or the sun, stars and moon, he had some faith the blue light was of a different nature. And then, he appeared.

His new friend.

He screamed at the end of his shock. Somehow he managed to calm down after he saw his "quiet" gesture.

He was wondering how he should deal with him. He honestly believed his words when he said, "It's okav."

He wonder if this was a visitor. He brewed tea in a teapot while telling him, "Wait a minute." It may have been the best possible response for Tatsumi who grew up only in peace, without knowing magecraft, mysteries, violence or dangerous places. As a result, choosing the act of "dialogue" in front of a sudden intruder would have been one of the correct answers.

Tatsumi:	"So,	uhh"	

For a while————

Catalyzed by the **spell** Tatsumi spoke and something in his grandfather's keepsakes, a supernatural event occurred that would not have been originally possible. The event caused him to appear in his small apartment in the corner of the Setagaya Ward. His name.

Tatsumi who heard such things from his mouth from over the low dining table, poured a second hot cup of tea into his throat and then tried to calmly and diligently break the ice while remembering his grandmother's words.

Tatsumi: "Berserker? Jekyll? Hyde? So, what should I call you?"
Berserker: "Berserker. I don't mind if you call me that."
Tatsumi: "I see."

However, he didn't feel like a Berserker.

That was Tatsumi's impression of him as an intruder.

Certainly, Berserker must be a synonym for old Scandanavian warriors. He was glad he read that book that cites only knowledge that has little to do with grades. What percentage of his classmates could can make sense of it even if they hear the same word?

In that regard, he may not be so mediocre.

Berserker: "Don't say my true name as much as possible. I don't know where the the other magi's ears are, because whether you like it or not, it's up to you to hide my true identity."

Tatsumi: "That so?"
Berserker: "Yes."

He-----Berserker appeared to be a calm young man.

Like a foreigner, sitting directly on the floor seemed a little difficult for him, but he sat cross-legged on the tatami mat as if he was properly taught to, and replied to his words while staring straight into Tatsumi's eyes. If he asks, he will answer.



Tatsumi was convinced that he mustn't be a robber with a special scheme in mind.

There would be no merit in rushing into a high school student whose living alone's apartment, knowing that there is obviously no stuff or money, and above all else, his eyes.

He didn't feel like he was a telling a lie.

Not because he was alluded to his grandfather's keepsakes, but intuitively, Tatsumi was reminded of his grandfather's clear gaze who had passed away last year. They were somewhat similar to his. They were quiet eyes that spoke only what he had witnessed, unlike the words that were trying to steer the other person with some objective.

Tatsumi: "True name, huh?"

-----True name, Jekyll. Or rather, the anti-hero, Hyde.

Berserker had told him that both were his real names.

Naturally, he knew of them. They were the names of a main character in an old overseas novel. A good scholar who lets the "evil" part hidden within himself go on a rampage with a special drug, or, that was how the story went.

The name of the scholar is Jekyll. Hyde is the one who claims to be the "villanous" personality who appears with the drug.

Both are strictly the names of the same person. It is typical for characters in a novel with a special disposition to have them, whereas, a real person nomally doesn't have two names.

Even so, Tatsumi didn't think he was lying.

If so, then is he?

Tatsumi: "So is one your real name and the other is a pseudonym you usually use in association with your real name?"

Berserker: "Both are my true names."

Tatsumi: "I see."

He didn't really get it.

It felt like he was drawing some kind of parallel line.

Something definitive is missing in this conversation.

Tatsumi; "Um, hey. Berserker. I want you to answer me properly because its important...."

Berserker: "What is it?"

Tatsumi: "....You're human. Aren't you?"

Berserker: "No, I'm not."

Tatsumi: "Hm?"

So that's it.

There was certainly a definitive gap, though.

Berserker: "Truly. You possess good eyes, Tatsumi."

Tatsumi: "Huh? My eyes?"

Berserker: "As you've suspected, I am not a human being. I am a Servant who will aim for the Holy Grail with you."

And like that—————

From his mouth that spoke with clear **reason**, Tatsumi learned the existence of the "Holy Grail War." The omnipotent wish granting device, the Holy Grail.

Incarnations of myths, Heroic Spirits.

Users of mysteries, Magi.

The many mysteries that sternly exist in the world, and the unknown world of magecraft.

And that his own "right eye" was a "Mystic Eye" that allows him to use some kind of magecraft.

That it was likely his maternal family were the descendents of a magus lineage, and he believed that past no longer existed since there was no oral inheritance, but Tatsumi himself may have coincidentally inherited that trait as an atavism.

And that he was chosen to be one of the Masters who are the participants in the Holy Grail War.

Tatsumi: "The Holy Grail War, huh? And its starting in Tokyo."

Berserker: "That's right. No, it's better to say.....that it has already started."

Tatsumi: "I see....."

In all honesty.

He was fully aware he could only understand about half of it.

The world of magecraft? Holy Grail? Heroic Spirits?

Magi? Himself?

Even if he believes it let alone understand it, all this content requires a lot of energy.

Even so, he'll take all of Berserker's words at face value.

Tatsumi decided so. It was only a short time since he had met him, but he had decided on that.

Not because he witnessed the supernatural event of people appearing from nowhere. He feels like such a feat is a doable trick.

The reason why he decide to listen. It was-----

It was probably because Berserker's eyes resembled his.

It was his grandfather's clear eyes that Tatsumi saw at the end.



Heroic Spirits who are summoned with the tremendous power of the Holy Grail are heroes.

Or at least that's what the people at the Holy Church told the Mages Association.

This is true on the one hand, but there are special exceptions.

It is the "anti-hero."

A person who has an evil nature but is defined as a hero. So called "anti-heroes" are such people. Originally, it is not possible for the Holy Grail which is said to be a sacred cup according to literature, to summon an evil person. I am not going to discuss the concept of good and evil here. However, if the "virtuous soul" the Holy Church speaks of is at least a Heroic Spirit, then this is a contradiction.

I can think of several possible reasons. Although their original nature is just and good, they are——an exceptionally evil Heroic Spirit. If good and evil are still theoretical concepts, then this theory would be a bit painful.

If I were to speak of another possibility..... Suppose the Holy Grail doesn't guide only "virtuous souls", after all.

Then, it would be reasonable to have "anti-heroes" mixed in with the righteous heroes.

The men from the Holy Church would strongly reject this supposition.

If I were to borrow their words.....

"The Holy Grail is completely good."

They would declare.

Therefore, if an "anti-hero" should appear in the Holy Grail War, the former theory must be correct. But if they told it to us Magi that way———

The words they swear to the God they serve are absolute to them.

Therefore, I have no choice but to place my trust in them. But.

There is a strange uneasiness.

I didn't get any divination from my astrology. It's just---An indescribable anxiety is now in my heart.

(An excerpt from an old notebook)



Shinjuku at night. Keiou Department Store Rooftop.

Tatsumi brought him here, saying softly that he wanted to see the sky.

He remembers coming to this place with his parents and little sister who were still in Tokyo when

While few, the stars are there.

They shined beautifully, if not as much as in the countryside where his grandfather was.

Tatsumi: "......Now which one is the Winter Triangle?"

He mutters, while exhaling his white breathe.

When he turned his gaze back into the sky, there was a terribly nostalgic scenery there. A play facility that was like a small amusement park, which is typical of a department store rooftop—————Keiou Sky Playland with several rides for children. It was past 5 pm, so it was already closed.

So there are few human figures.

Contrary to Tatsumi who was sitting on one of the benches close to the fence, he, Berserker turned his cool eyes towards the starless night sky. What was he thinking? Are the stars he sees different from his homeland, or rather, the English capital city of London where he lived in his lifetime? Or did the stars look different in the northern and southern hemispheres?

Berserker: "Two days ago. I told you the night we met."

Tatsumi: "Hmm."

Berserker: "I....I am certainly a character in a story told as a novel. To be precise, I am the person who became the model for it. No, I am what the human who transformed into a Heroic Spirit after his death was and something who was guided to you in the form of a Servant by you and the Holy Grail."

They were certainly the words he heard on that night, two days ago. Tatsumi held the same deep emotions as that same time. That is.....

Tatsumi: "It's so confusing"

Berserker: "I'm sorry. But this is the truth. I used to be objective when I was a scholar in my lifetime, but now, I have the most certain objective facts. I can assure you, I'm a Servant not a human."

Tatsumi: "It's okay. I believe you. You are a Servant, not a human, and you came to do this Holy Grail War thing with me."

Berserker: "That's right."

He nods as he turns from the starry sky towards him.

He was a handsome man.

Mr. Jekyll who he read about in a novel felt a little older then he appeared, but when he replied, he said it. "Servants are not necessarily limited to their appearance from when they died." It awfully seems like that.

Berserker: "I am a human from the last century......the 19th Century."

Tatsumi: "I've heard this already."

Berserker: "Yes. I've said it. That's why I wanted to see the citizens, the people who live in this 20th Century. I knew what kind of society and customs Tokyo has in 1991 with the information granted to me by the Holy Grail."

Tatsumi: "I heard that too."

Berserker: "Oh. That's true. And I became aware of it today. People haven't changed. Same with the city, it's just a place where many people enjoy their lives."

As he said it, Berserker smiled for some reason.

He had a kind and gentle expression.

He's sure it would have been nice to see this smile on the passing women, who were constantly looking back and whispering not only in front of Alta but throughout the night. Tatsumi vaguely thinks, it's a waste to point it only towards himself, on the roof of a department store where there is almost nobody around in the middle of the night. Why does he smile, when his new friend who claims to be the same person as the protagonist of a novel————materialised by surpassing time?

Tatsumi: "Umm, are you satisfied? Well then, I'm glad too. It was worth the effort to skip class on a weekday."

Berserker: "You have my gratitude, Tatsumi."

Tatsumi: "No. Doesn't this mean you're thanking me again?"

Berserker: "It's true that I'm grateful. So let me say it."

A strange turn, what is it?

Berserker said to Tatsumi who actually tilted his head, after tilting it inwardly.

His impression remains quiet without changing his tone. However, there's a little enthusiasm somewhere in there—————

No. Surely, it's with determination.

Berserker: "Even now, I still regret it. Even if it was derived from an experiment using my miracle drug, my own life couldn't stop the "Hyde" within me. The fact that we had already made a lot of victims, when I stopped him in exchange for my life."

Sincere. Serious.

It's not like he was raising his voice at all, but they were heartrending words like a scream. It wasn't an atmosphere where he could interject too much.

So Tatsumi silently accepts his gaze and words.

Briefly, he pauses.

It was the story he heard last night.

"Therefore, even if I walk around outside materialized, the enemy will not detect me."

Berserker: "I am powerless. It's difficult to exert my strength without going on a rampage. I'm not sure I'm the right person for the Holy Grail War which will probably unfold into a battle to the death as we probe each other's true identities. Even so, I wonder. I still want to relieve the regrets smouldering in my heart in this city where people live without change as the time and place, I once lived in."

Tatsumi: "...... This is connected to what you said when you said that you wanted to go out today."

At last, Tatsumi tells him the words.

While slightly hoping for something, so that his meaning is not mistaken.

And then, Servant Berserker-

Berserker: "Right. The Holy Grail War is stipulated to be a secret feud by the character of the mages, but the power of a Heroic Spirit is enormous. Their power which is wielded as a re-enactment of a raging myth or legend, may be equal to that of the great war your grandfather saw. If it intensifies, then Tokyo will turn into a literal battlefield, and many people may be sacrificed to it. That's why, I......"

Again. He smiles.

While keeping his eyes serious and sincere.

However, while only changing the shape of his face to a gentle one.

He said this.

Berserker: "That's why, this time, I want to be a hero of justice from the outset."

And then....



In the past, Tatsumi was a hero of justice.

With the power of justice given to him, he'd face off with evil monsters and organisations that threaten the city and throw lots of people into fear, by transforming or boarding giant robots, and continued to protect the peace of the city and its people———————————————————like other boys the same age.

The days of his childhood.

The past that protected the absurd world.

For example, when he was innocently playing at this Keiou Sky Play Land.

He did so until the lower grades of elementary school. It's a memory of the distant past now, so he doesn't really think back on it, and doesn't try to recall it because it's too embarrassing to try. But. Certainly, he was a hero of justice.

Identifying himself with the masked heroes he saw on TV, he would use his neighbourhood friends as the leaders of evil organisations and monsters. Naturally, he must have had roughly the same number of times when he had to stand in the way of the hero on the evil side instead.

Childish make-believe. Interestingly, his little sister who kept tagging along saying, "I want to be with my brother," would mainly play the hostage, as he kept saving the world and attacking the world until the sun went down.

Was it fun?

It's more proper to say he doesn't remember it well.

Along with the other memories of his childhood inside Tatsumi, they were all vaguely contained into a "fun past where he played with everyone," so it wasn't clearly sorted into whether it was fun or not fun to pick up stuff that only focused on things related to heroes of justice.

There was only one thing.

There was one thing that he remembered by overcoming his embarrassment.

Tatsumi's Sister: "Hey, big brother."
Yes
It was when his little sister called out to him.

It strangely happened when they were in the middle of going back home by walking along the Maruko River after going out and playing. The two of them were holding hands side by side towards their two-storey single family home which was very close to the apartment he was currently living in.

She was smaller than a child her age————but now she was much taller and could cheekily claim, "Maybe I'll surpass you next year, Big Brother" ———but his little sister would usually tag along with Tatsumi to the places he would go play.

On the way back, they always walked hand in hand.

He was told to do it by his father and mother, and even if he didn't reach out to her, his little sister would wilfully hold his, as if it happened naturally.

His little sister at that time wasn't one who talked a lot, so on the way back, he would usually talk about something and his little sister would just nod, "yeah." That is why he clearly remembers that time. He can recall it.

Tatsumi's Sister: "A while ago, when Nori did that bad thing...."

He didn't remember the details.

However, it must have been after playing with his classmate, Norimitsu.

Norimitsu is a villain. A vanguard of evil who attacks Tokyo.

On the other hand, Tatsumi is a hero of justice. A cyborg who fights against evil, or something like that.

And, his little sister who was the hostage as usual----

Tatsumi's Sister: "It was a little scary......"

He didn't know what made his sister say that. The current Tatsumi couldn't specifically recall what he did, but, whenever Norimitsu who becomes engrossed or rather relatively actor-oriented, would splendidly laugh evilly in a loud voice or play the villain, making a speech about this or that just like a villain in a TV show, the adults in the neighbourhood would yell at him to "be quiet."

So maybe, that's why she was scared. His little sister.

The words of Norimitsu who totally behaves like a villain. His voice.

Tatsumi's Sister: "Just a little though."

As she says, his little sister's hand was just a little..... Just a wee bit.

Trembling----

Tatsumi's Sister: "But I wasn't scared because I was with you, brother."

"What's that?"

"I thought you were scared."

He believes, he said it to her like that and made his sister laugh.



Tatsumi: "...... A hero of justice, huh?"

On the rooftop of Keio Department Store at night, he muses on the words of his new friend. Tatsumi Kitano was an ordinary young man.

Average in grades. Average in sports.

His hobbies were bird watching and reading.

He never knew the truth of the world.

He didn't know magecraft, nor mysteries, nor fear.

Fully like boys his age, while refraining from the Armageddon in eight years that some old astrologer prophesied, even if he sometimes said, "if the prophecy was true," he'd just spend 1991 being busy and enjoying himself.

Everything about him was mediocre.

He doesn't even remember the past when he was playing with his friends when he was little.

ľ	Lower	rer	 	 _

Tatsumi: (Tokyo, will become a battlefield?)

The Holy Grail War.

Although he heard that it was type of magecraft ritual with such a name, he vaguely wondered if it was a war that exchanged lives. To put it frankly, he didn't really feel it. He didn't even have the concrete feeling that his own life would be in jeopardy let alone others. Even if he was suddenly told so, such a thing is impossible.

That's why he was able to listen to Berserker's conversation no different than usual, and was able to show him around the city of Shinjuku. The words "somebody else's problem" may have been the closest.

But. Now....

Hearing the words, "Tokyo will become a battlefield---------'

He had something to think about.

He can also feel it.

The name Tokyo is the name of a city in this country.

The unmistakable capital. The city where he lives.

When his father was transferred, Tatsumi had chosen to stay in Setagaya, Tokyo where he was accustomed to living in, of course, because the main reason was for exams, he was not aware of anything else.

Even if that were so.

He had something to think about.

He felt it.

Ah, the person named Tatsumi Kitano recognizes Tokyo as "his city."

Tokyo. This city, where he has inseparable friends whom he has known since elementary and middle school.

Tokyo. This city, where a gentle old man greets him when he takes out the trash in the morning.

Tokyo. This city, where there is a convenience store clerk who exchanges words with him whenever he drops by on his way home from school at night.

Tokyo. This city, where there are people always hastily coming and going in front of the private railway station he uses to go to school.

—————This Tokyo, where there is a female classmate who sits next to him and smiles at him once every three days.

Tatsumi: "A hero of justice, huh?"

Again, he was unconsciously muttering the same words.

Berserker: "You can laugh if you find it funny, Master."

Tatsumi: "As if I could laugh at that."

He briefly replied.

They were heartfelt words he coldly said.

Tatsumi: "I don't have a clue about magecraft or stuff like that. I didn't think this right eye was such a big deal until you told me, and I don't know if I can use it properly."

Berserker: "I'll teach you. I wasn't a magus in my lifetime, but I did attain a modicum of alchemy at the end of my pharmaceutical studies. So I can teach you that much."

Tatsumi: "Can we win with that? Those mages and Heroic Spirits are monsters, y'know."

Berserker: "Don't know."

Tatsumi: "Haha, what's with that? You're so honest."

He chuckles lightly.

Surely, this is also because he doesn't really feel it.

Tatsumi: "Don't make me laugh."

Shrugging his shoulders, Tatsumi looks up at the night sky again.

There are few stars out.

He had a strange belief that his mother and little sister who were returning to her parents' home for an estate sale were probably looking at the same sky as well. His father who should still be busy working in his new countryside workplace, and who should be being a corporate warrior at this time, was surely looking at the sky too.

Tatsumi: (This is different from disobeying them. I got caught up in it.)

He thinks of the bruise-like pattern that emerged on his body.

A Command Seal. A black winged crest said to have been bestowed on him by the Holy Grail, which gives absolutes commands to his Servant and strictly indicates that he is a participant in the Holy Grail War. The number of wings is one. Apparently, he is of the lowest rank, as it seems the more wings they show, the better the magus.

No matter how he thinks about it, it's bad.

It's crazy to think he can do something about it.

Tatsumi recognized that he was relatively calm, even though he had not yet seen the wonder of magecraft and the tremendous power wielded by Heroic Spirits.

A world he did not know.

A mysterious world where those who exercise magecraft are rampant.

He had heard from Berserker over the last two nights, that there are some mages who can compete with the police and army even though they are living flesh and blood, and even if they are a Heroic Spirit, they can destroy aircraft fighters and tanks. Believe it or not, they are amazing monsters.

Thinking sensibly, his ordinary self didn't think he could face off against them.

Him, who couldn't even beat trained police officers and soldiers? A second-year high school boy, who quit karate class in half a year, and at best, saved the world only in childhood games of make-believe?

It's so ridiculous. Yes, Tatsumi laughs because his reason clearly tells him so.

Indeed, it was very ridiculous.

The nature of Berserker he heard about last night is truly unsuitable for the mechanism of the Holy Grail War, and he comes and says that he must "defeat all six Masters and Servants" in that state.

But, even so.

Tatsumi: "......If I can't run, then I guess I'll have to do it."

In this moment.

Tatsumi Kitano decided to steel himself.

If there is a person who knew of the real battlefield, or a person who actually knows the world of magecraft, then he cannot prepare himself for such a thing. He would say it was just a matter of going with the flow. Tatsumi also thought that this resolve and determination was something like that.

Even so.....

Tatsumi believes that this is his answer.

He will protect this city.

As long as he is involved in it, he will do as much as he can for it. After that, as his kind grandmother who passed away much earlier than his grandfather said. "Keep your eyes on what you have to do, without losing your composure." Tatsumi: "Let's do it, Berserker. I might not be a hero of justice, but, I, I want to protect this Tokyo where everyone gave me a smile. If this Holy Grail War destroys Tokyo and kills people ____ then I want to stop it!" Humbly. Mediocrely. However, certainly with his own will, Tatsumi was telling it to the non-human in front of him. Berserker: ".....Thank you. Then my wish has been fulfilled here and now." Tatsumi: "Hm?" Berserker: "In my former life, I who had turned into an "anti-hero" because I fell into evil madness and temptation, my heart's desire was nothing but to carry out justice. So, Tatsumi. From the moment I was summoned by the young man called you, my wish....." ——My wish to the Holy Grail. Was already fulfilled." After expressing those words. With the night sky at his back, he turns his hand towards him. His new friend who had three names was holding out his right hand. His expression was quiet but still serious. Sincere. Berserker: "Let's stop the Holy Grail War and save Tokyo. Your wish cannot be granted by the Holy Grail, you have to do it with your own hands, Master." Tatsumi: "I'll do everything I can. If the girl I like dies before Valentine's Day, then, I can't die even if I do die." Saying it daringly light-heartedly, Tatsumi.... Also holds out his right hand. It was----It was an oath under the starry sky. Somewhat different than an exchange between a proper Servant and Master. An oath of the new friends' resolve and determination.



Beautiful Mind Arc

Act-3

Berserker's Master confronts the slaughter ritual.

A certain day in February, 1991.

The eighth day since Berserker's summoning. Late at night.

In a quiet back alley in a quiet residential area in Suginami Ward, Tokyo.

Despite being in Tokyo, the alley faced a green area.

It doesn't look like a residential area, it's too vast and can be described as a "forest." A black forest. For example, it is not too uncommon to find large park facilities such as Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden, Yoyogi Park, Egota-no-Mori Park in the Nakano Ward and Ueno Park in the Taito Ward, but at least on a map, but there no such facilities on this map, so the forest like denseness must be privately owned.

In other words, it is not a place where other people are allowed to enter.

It's easy to tell by the barbed wire-covered fence. And although it is easy for an adult male to climb over it, there is more than enough off-limits signs. More than enough. The fence is equipped with powerful magecraft liken to clearing people out, and humans who see it will have their desire to approach or trespass dwindle.

In a sense, it was a kind design.

No one maliciously trying to step into private land, nor adventurous children or reckless youths, will step into the black forest where many deathly traps are woven with mana and magecraft. Those who are not entirely familiar with magecraft will leave, and even magi are expected to be cautious and disperse.

'Indeed	I'm grateful	for it.
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'Yes,' the blonde young man thinks deep down tonight.

The black forest, which is covered with many layers of deathly bounded fields, is more dangerous than a minefield in a conflict zone if he expresses it according to the modern era of the twentieth century. Like the liquid outer core of the planet's core or the void of space close to the sun, it is also equivalent to a space of certain death that does not allow the existence of living organisms.

Tatsumi: ".....Why are expressing it in terms of earth science or physics, Berserker?" Berserker: 'Because you let me read your textbooks. No, I'm sorry.'

Tatsumi: "But it's still a dangerous place. Over there."

Berserker: 'True. But even in outer space, people can connect their lives with the wisdom of spacesuits. Similarly, though not the same, I can move through the forest of death due to my nature as a Servant. Though I do not possess magic resistance.'

The parameters given to Berserker by using his Noble Phantasm, especially endurance, can also be used for head-on battles with Servants classified as the three knight classes. His body which withstands the ferocity spoken of in myths and legends, is optimised by the morphological changes that accompanies his self-modification skill, and it appears that it can take on all the deathly magical bounded fields. Of course, it goes without saving that there are limits.

Tatsumi: "I don't think humanity has been able to develop a suit that can withstand the heat of the earth's core."

Berserker: 'It'll be realised someday. Because the possibilities that people have are endless.'

Tatsumi: "Endless?"
Berserker: 'Yes, endless.'
Tatsumi: "Is that how it goes?"
Berserker: 'It's that sort of thing, Master'

The Holy Grail War. Berserker thinks about the war situation.

It's a stalemate so far.

Even though each Servant has occasionally engaged in battles in various parts of Tokyo, all seven Masters and Servants are likely still alive. And, it is only this "forest" in Suginami that is clearly confirmed to have a sitting Master and Servant.

Tatsumi: "Then, let's proceed with the plan without change. Berserker."

Berserker: "Ok. Tatsumi"

His last words overlaps with his voice. He turns his green gaze towards the "forest."



The black forest. The forest of death. A mansion with an extremely vast site, it's like a backyard so to speak — — — — not a proper forest. A fake customized by the owner of the mansion. In other words, it is the only entrance leading to the main residence of the Reiroukan family, a prestigious family that is secretly said to control the magecraft world of the Far East. The entire site of the Reiroukan estate is now a threatening magical workshop, with the extremely strong bounded fields as mentioned before, and only this tear in a corner of this "forest" which was prepared as an outright trap is in a state where it is possible to forcibly invade from the outside.

Initially, it was a little different.

Judging from Berserker's experience who had secretly tried to invade the premise on the second day since his summoning, it was certain that it was a toppleable bounded field if he was prepared for some exhaustion. But two days later. The bounded field that covered the entire grounds were strengthened to a terrifying degree. It's like something else. Even he, who is not so forgiving of magecraft, could grasp its wonderful technique.

Truly a space of certain death. Is it the liquid outer core of the planet's core or the void of space close to the sun?

Bounded field design and construction which can be called a special technique unattainable by modern magi, and the work of those who appear with a class that is most proficient in exercising magecraft even among Heroic Spirits that are the embodiment of myths and legends.

—————First of all, the reconstruction of the workshop was Caster's work.

He had turned Reiroukan manor into a "temple"-class magical fortress.

Could he say that he should have forced it that night they had decided it was possible to break though? However, at that time, they were still uncertain that the Reiroukan magus was a Holy Grail War participant, and he did not even act with his Master's consent. Therefore, Berserker quickly withdrew.

Berserker: '......Don't regret what has already passed, huh?'

He recalls what his Master said yesterday.

Or were they the words of his late grandmother?

As a result, they were unable to prevent the establishment of the powerful temple-class workshop, nor were they able to defeat Master Reiroukan before he could summon

Caster————nor kill him. And, young Tatsumi had to say it to Berserker who regrets that he had no choice but to retreat from the sky silver Heroic Spirit who appears to be Saber whom he encountered last night.

if that's the case. He doesn't regret it.

Like him, he will just do what he can do now.

Berserker: "	Dangerous Game ⁵ ."
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With the release of its true name, he takes the liquid Noble Phantasm stored in the small bottle. This is a suitable game time.

If Saber was also targeting the Reiroukan estate, then this situation is time-sensitive.

Therefore, he does not hesitate. He is strongly aware that he must not think about the risks brought by the side effects for now.

He swallows it down and gulps it.

From his mouth. From his tongue. From his throat. From the bowels of his stomach. The Noble Phantasm instantly permeates every corner of his ether composed body, and immediately transforms his transient body.

Probably because his class is Berserker. Unlike the appearance he had when he transformed after medicating like this in his lifetime, and the appearance that was portrayed as a novel work modelled after himself, Jekyll transforms into a shape close to his true nature.

He transforms. Changes. Shapeshifts. Self-modifies himself.

His skeleton creaks, his muscle mass increases, his body solidifies, and his fangs and claws stretch like a sword.

His existence itself changes as it expands. While cloaking himself in a haze that resembles a black shadow.

His flesh changes.

His awareness changes.

All reason is wiped out, as he transforms into a mass of destructive impulses that embodies

The desire for prey manifests itself in a forward leaning stance, and a torrent of hostility and murderous impulses makes his red eyes shine.

Berserker:	"Ruuuuggghhh-	 ,,
berserker:	Kuuuugggnnn-	

While surely hiding determination as he sinks into the depths of his soul.

Berserker who had turn into a mad beast moans.

He's like a "beast" that devours all human blood.

However, while hoping to be a "hero" to protect the lives of all people-



⁵ Dangerous Game; The Secret Game of Sin

At that same time.

In a vacant room in an apartment overlooking the "forest" behind the Reiroukan estate. Tatsumi Kitano was watching over Berserker's "raid" countless times through the binoculars that he usually used for birdwatching, with a rice ball he bought at a twenty-four-hour convenience store in one hand.

On the fourth day, they detected that the Reiroukan residence had turned into a "workshop that could even be called a temple" because of his acts of desperation. Counting the first invasion attempt which Tatsumi was unaware of, it was exactly the sixth attempt. The first two times were "invasions," but for the following four times, both Tatsumi and Berserker clearly recognize their actions as "raids."

A challenge———	
Is such an expression	possible?

The overthrow of a magus who reigns over Tokyo and is trying to execute some evil ritual.

Tatsumi: ".....I wish I could communicate with him."

He murmurs a little, after swallowing the salmon rice ball.

Even though it's indoors, it's a room with no heaters, so when he speaks, his white breath leaks out. It's cold.

He cannot remove his jumper. Or rather, exposing himself to the cold and exhausting himself any more is just sheer stupidity. Tatsumi strongly realizes that his mana is endlessly delivered to Berserker through their path.

The consumption of lifeforce that is converted into mana by his magic circuits.

Sudden exhaustion and fatigue.

It is something that he doesn't usually feel at all and the use of Noble Phantasms makes Berserker truly perform as a Servant, but from the moment he turned into a windstorm of madness, it weighed on Tatsumi in the shape of intense exhaustion and fatigue. It's really rough. Harsh. Although its harsher than running around the school at full power, he won't complain. He won't say it. He has no intention of saying it.

He remembers last night.

Berserker fell behind during his battle with Saber, the Heroic Spirit of the Sword, probably because he was too inexperienced as a magus. Tatsumi who can barely use his inherited mystic eye, is not able to supply him with enough mana. Berserker who has the rank of the second ranked Servant, would originally be a match for the three knights ——————but because he didn't know magecraft, or mysteries, it was a feeling that Tatsumi could expect even if he didn't

get the particulars of the Holy Grail War, and at the same time, it was one of the main factors that made him feel regretful.

'If I were a magus with more superior magic circuits———'
'Then my friend should be able to go all out with his power.'

Tatsumi: "Go for it, Berserker. I don't mind if you go all out tonight."

That's what the rice balls were for.

He spent a lot of the allowance sent by his parents for his living expenses for this month, buying up this and that not to mention expensive health drinks. From what Tatsumi experienced over the last few days, the consumption of mana seemed to be close to physical exhaustion, so he prepared something that could make up for such stamina, but in truth, he didn't know if this would fit the hill.

Whether or not the consumed energy can be made up for with rice balls and health drinks.

His friend told him that it wasn't in vain for the time being.

He was a little disappointed, because his manner of speech indicated that it wasn't completely useful. But he won't give up. He doesn't want to make Tokyo a battlefield. He won't let it. With that one intent, Tatsumi Kitano decided to do everything he can do.

Tatsumi: "Reiroukan....."

The black forest he could see beyond his binoculars.

He thinks of the person who lives in that manor.

Master Reiroukan who has a strong bounded field laid out in the middle of Suginami Ward, and who doesn't seem to move from there.

Surely, his aim was-

He must have chosen to hole himself up with his mansion as his own personal fort. Although he is not very good at his Japanese and World History classes, Tatsumi can guess that much all the same. Certainly, he thinks that they have a lot of self-confidence in their defences as they've formed bounded fields that his friend says are like the earth's core or the void of space, but he is unsettled that they've chosen a siege battle right in the middle of an urban area.

With that, he will definitely stop it. Tatsumi sincerely wishes to stop it.

Tatsumi: "That girl from yesterday, tonight....she's not in the forest, well that's to be expected." While eating his second rice ball. He recalls the figure of the little girl; he saw through Berserker's "eyes." Was it due to his innate Mystic eye or some kind of magecraft exercise? Tatsumi shared his transforming friend's sight, if not completely. That's why he saw it. Last night. That girl who was paralysed with fear-That girl, who had encountered Berserker who had invaded the black forest, must definitely be a relative of the Reiroukan family. She was just a girl around the age of maybe a middle or upper elementary grade school girl. She had very beautiful black hair and looked like an adult. She was a cute girl. Recalling his little sister when she was her age, no, did he do it without remembering her, regardless Tatsumi continued to fervently send the order "Don't kill that child," to Berserker who was connected to himself through their path. However. His words hardly reached his friend who had lost all reason due to the activation of his Madness Enhancement skill. If he was able to grasp this in the last few days, it was the fact that — Tatsumi who only had frail magic circuits could end up exhausting himself so much, that the instinctively dangerous Berserker would no longer be able to maintain his transformation state, and eventually had to release his Noble Phantasm, then he only had to wait for him to withdraw, but just when he decided that he no choice but to use a Master Degree to stop him, he appeared. Saber. A Heroic Spirit who wields an invisible weapon. It wasn't like he gave his name, so he wasn't really sure of his class. But, Tatsumi was convinced that he must be Saber. 'That Servant, who fought brilliantly against Berserker and protected the black-haired girl, must truly be a true hero befitting the first rank.' A prince from a fairy-tale. Or a noble knight that appears in medieval knight stories. If he wanted to express himself, then that figure would-Tatsumi: 'If it's him, I might be able to talk to with him.'

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He thinks with a little expectation. No. It is an impossible subject. He was told by his stern friend that encountering an enemy Servant means death for a Master. Tatsumi can understand the logic. The seven Masters and Servants who participate in the Holy Grail War, have "wishes" as rule, and fight for their lives to fulfill them. If they meet a hostile Master, then the Servant will almost certainly turn their blade against them. To fulfill their wish in the present era of the 20th century which is far from the era they lived in.

Even that Saber who protected the girl should be no exception.

Heroic Spirits fight. With their mighty power.

Heroic Spirits fight. Regardless of their origin.

In this city. To the people. It will cause enormous damage to them.

By now, the "soul devouring" by Assassin is continuing not only in Ikebukuro, but also in various parts of Tokyo.

Someone has also been killed tonight.

No matter how reckless the challenge is.

According to Berserker's investigation, the shadow ruler reigns over the darkness of Tokyo.

Master Reiroukan. Tatsumi absolutely couldn't afford to leave the evil magus who must have been trying to push Tokyo into the turmoil of the Holy Grail War, without sitting or taking action.

There is something he must do in front of him. He had discovered the enemy.

He has to do it for everyone.

No matter how inferior he is. Or inexperienced. Even if he is reckless, or unsightly.

Even with the amazing destructive power of Berserker, who had turned into a mad beast using his Noble Phantasm, he still cannot reach the main residence after many tries. If they cannot encounter Caster who seems to be able to manipulate powerful magecraft, then they can't even ascertain what their Noble Phantasm is.

Nevertheless.

Tatsumi Kitano does not give up and continues to challenge it.

All while continuing to endure the intermittent exhaustion that seems to be screaming at him tonight.

Tonight for sure-

With his and his new friend's — Berserker's hands. For sure.

He will stop the Holy Grail War.



Stop the Holy Grail War	
In other words, to put it neatly, "defeat them	"

Or to put it tangibly, "kill" them.

Tatsumi himself, to a certain extent, foresaw that such an unsettling act would be necessary.

So that Tokyo won't be destroyed. So that people won't be killed.

A large number of adult men have died of unknown causes.

The victims had entered a hotel with a girl in white clothes who appeared to be Assassin, and died the next morning, with the same words always written in lipstick in the room's mirror.

Although police were stubbornly hiding the information, it had already become the rumour of "11 pm Death Mary" at the high school where Tatsumi attends. Strangely, it wasn't talked about on TV, and it was only spoken a little in public on late night radio programs, so it seemed to spread to young people in no time.

Similar stories were circulating even in elementary and junior high schools.

It has become an urban legend of that kind, such as the human face dog or the Slit-Mouthed Woman that was popular a while ago.

Tatsumi: "It looks like the Reiroukan family is putting pressure on them. The police, I mean."

A few days ago. Berserker had said as much.

 $Matters\ pertaining\ to\ the\ Holy\ Grail\ War\ are\ to\ be\ kept\ hidden.\ No\ matter\ how\ many\ people\ die\ in\ the\ process\ of\ it.$

Berserker: "There was a rumour that the Holy Church are moving out in some uncertain information."

Tatsumi: "The church, you mean that church where you go to confess or pray at?"

Berserker: "That's kinda close. But that's not it."

Even if he didn't understand it, he could only understand that there was a darkness in society that Tatsumi didn't know about, and that the Holy Grail War is being operated while being deeply

linked to it. So it cannot be easily stopped. He can't rush to a police box and dial 110 in a straightforward manner. Similarly, he had no choice but to tackle those dark acts.

Even if he had to dye these hands in blood.

But
Could he "defeat" the enemy?
Could he "kill" the enemy?

Would he have no choice but to do the same things as those who carry out the Holy Grail War in order to stop it?

It was a small rumour compared to "Death Mary," a story that carries on the premise that there will be dead people.

It was not as impactful as the female homicidal maniac who leaves a message in lipstick. Even so, Tatsumi headed to Akihabara.

One, or maybe two people.

He had a feeling—————that it might be a Servant.

Choosing one of the multi-tenant buildings, Berserker stood by on the roof. While Tatsumi decided to wander around and search for the Master. Since they would consider him to be an average citizen if he didn't use magic, he would try not to look as much as possible even if something goes wrong. Berserker told him if he saw it, then he would likely lose his life at the hands of the Master as part of the concealment of mysteries.

He mustn't glimpse at it. Mysteries.

He mustn't get to know it. Magecraft.

He said that mages are such creatures. As he knew enough from Assassin's example, they do not necessarily attach importance to social morals, ethics, etc, but value the study of mysteries untouched by people's eyes. Indeed. However, Tatsumi could quite understand what he meant when he said that the properties of mysteries diminishes as it spreads.

Berserker: "If they determine that you aren't looking at anything or if there is a chance that the enemy Master is wondering how to deal with you. If by chance, that happens."

Tatsumi: "T-that's a very low possibility, right?"

Berserker: "It's your strategy. Is your resolve wavering?"

Tatsumi: "No."

Berserker: "Then, don't look at anything ever. Use that eyes half-closed technique that Oriental Samurai do, try to grasp your surroundings without focusing in on them. Okay. Instead, call me the moment you feel something is off. With a Master Degree. Got it."

A Master Degree. A powerful magical power brought by the Grail as an absolute command right. A black pattern of a single wing had emerged on Tatsumi's left shoulder. He understood that it was extremely valuable as there were only three strokes in general, but he wouldn't hesitate to use it in an emergency.

Tatsumi: 'Though, I'm putting my life on line on a hit or miss. This'
Even though he devised it himself, it's a shocking detail.
While sighing inwardly, Tatsumi walked through Akihabara at night, a downtown with few
people.
And then—————
The reliable hunch became reality and appeared in front of Tatsumi.
He had seen it

He had seen it

He was told that he shouldn't look at it. Or rather, why did that friend think that Tatsumi was capable of the eyes half-closed special technique that could only be seen in period novels? Did he think that any man from a samurai country could do the same thing? He didn't know. Even if he did not know, it was too late. He saw it. No. To be precise, yes....

He found them.

Tatsumi: 'I've done it! I'm faster!'

She was distracted.

He thinks it was a stupid action now. There was also a certain amount of idiocy in it. Naturally, the result was endless scolding by his indignant friend after the fact. But Tatsumi took action at his own discretion, without obeying his directions.

Tatsumi:	66	tch!2

With his own "right eye." He concentrates on his senses. He activates his mystic eye — — — in the last few days, it was possible for him to activate it in two seconds — — and stares at the woman while feeling the sudden consumption of mana. It's a little better than using a Noble Phantasm. Her gaze. Her reaction. He placed it on her. It appears the automatic resistance by the target creature, which Berserker had taught him about the activation and exercise mechanism, has failed. Meaning, the mystic eye worked correctly. All of the target's movements "stop."

He runs up to the woman who should be unable to move.

He grabs her right arm through the still open side-window.

A more delicate response than he expected.

There is no reaction. She doesn't move. She can't move.

After that----

Tatsumi; 'What are you going to do? Tatsumi. Tatsumi Kitano! You, from here!'

-What do you do? What should he do? From this situation, this approach. His mystic eye can only temporarily stop the movements of creatures.

It's a powerful effect, but not a decisive attack. In other words, he can't

hurt——or kill someone with his mystic eye.

A weapon. He didn't have one. Although his new friend repeatedly told him to carry something. Unarmed. For himself who couldn't maintain his mystic eye and couldn't even last long in karate. It was no good.

Furthermore, more than anything.....

For starters..... It's just.....

——I can't do something like kill someone!

If that's so.....

Why is he like this?

Use the mystic eye. Stop their movements. Get so close to the person who should be his enemy.

His friend explained to Tatsumi that mages and Heroic Spirits can be more dangerous than humans with guns and bombs. He said so too. It's like grabbing onto the arm of a soldier on a battlefield without a weapon, so to speak. Or is it more correct to say he was touching the edge of a weapon?

He was doing something stupid.

What to do, Tatsumi Kitano? What will you do from here on?

—————There was an answer. With his determination.

Maybe. He's sure it is. It was a little slim enough to assert that he couldn't rely on his confidence and grounds.

From the start. From the moment he decided to go to Akihabara on this day.

He wanted to do this.

On the streets of Akihabara, Tatsumi must have staked everything into this reckless decision at this moment.

Tatsumi: "Please listen to me."

Quietly. He calms down.

While recalling his grandmother's words, Tatsumi spoke to the woman.

Tatsumi: "......I want to stop the Holy Grail War!"





About the management of the Holy Grail War.

Needless to say, the Holy Grail War is nothing more than a magecraft ritual centred around the Greater Grail and the Lesser Grail brought from the Holy Church.

The Mages Association will be shaped according to the Church's proposal.

However, the Holy Grail War is never held under the management of the church.

An Overseer is dispatched from the Church, but he is only an Overseer. Know that they are different from an administrator.

Should the Holy Grail War continue for a second or third time, or——

There will be discussions between the Mages Association and the Holy Church, to consider which one has the right to run the Holy Grail War, but in the first ever Holy Grail War held in Tokyo at least, there is no clear administrator.

A mutual slaughter by seven Masters and Servants. Scrambling for the Holy Grail.

That is nothing but the Holy Grail War.

Both the Church and the Association are essentially just assistants to this magecraft ritual.

Concealment of mysteries is an absolute rule for mages, but no finer rules are inherently enacted for this Holy Grail War.

In short----

They will kill each other; scramble, until one Master and Servant pair remains.

Know that no one can stop the progress of the Holy Grail War.

(An excerpt from an old notebook)



Although, it is likely.

Berserker is going to kill Master Reiroukan——————

On the night of the seventh day since the arrival of his new friend, 'Yes,' Tatsumi Kitano thinks while sensing his own mana being consumed endlessly through their path. His friend who had transformed into his guise to fight by releasing the true name of his Noble Phantasm, advances into the black forest with unprecedented momentum while taking on the obstructions caused by the numerous bounded fields with his body. He can see from his tentative body getting hurt. He can see his determination to keep moving forward, without giving up or retreating.

It was probably due to his determination from before his transformation, that he does not recklessly run wild and leave the forest.

His strength of will is tremendous. He thinks.

But, that's it.

Tatsumi already understood that the loss of reason due to his madness enhancement skill is absolute, and no further exceptions can be expected. His experiences from the past few days said so.

That's why, he can read Berserker's intentions.

Since, he, who turned into a mad beast and lost his reason, seeks only slaughter and destruction, even with an iron will, he can at best set a vector. In this case, his destination is the Reiroukan's main residence. Their operation will be successful if

they are able to intently proceed, destroy and kill the owner along with the main residence. Tm sure, he's thinking that way,' Tatsumi thinks.

That is ideal.

That is for the best.

Considering the nature of the Servant called Berserker and the resources of the work force of him and Tatsumi, there can be no other desirable developments.

But still....

Tatsumi: '----I don't want to kill. You know that, Jekyll'

While thinking of his friend's second name, he endures the feeling of the mana consumption. He wants to try a dialogue.

'Yes,' Tatsumi clearly thinks. Same as that night in Akihabara.

His new friend who was like a teacher to him, told him to think of Mages and Heroic Spirits as beings like monsters and weapons that think. He agreed to some extent. Given the battle between servants that he saw several times through his "eye", the words had unwavering legitimacy to them.

The battle in which existences with unrealistic powers collide, was projected as a force that cannot be compared to the anime and manga that Tatsumi has seen in his life so far.

If anything——————	
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Yes, it was closer to footage recorded on a battlefield.

Not a superhuman heroic figure or conspicuous service, but something terrifying that made him expect death.

It could be an ancient war, or the war that took place in the Middle East last year. It doesn't matter if it is a conflict zone in Southeast Asia. Anything. It doesn't matter if it's a record, an account, video, audio or whatever.

He hadn't that those kind of deep emotions from battlefield records for a long time. Rather, Tatsumi only understood it after the events of the last few days. This was the exact vague haze that he felt from weapons and soldier figures who carry guns, which was different from the coolness that that he had always seen from heroes on TV when he was a kid.

Death. Something that steals lives.

The power to ruthlessly destroy those that its directed to, regardless of the presence or absence of their determination and resolve at all.

Tatsumi: "I don't like it....I...."

He had no way to tell him.

His friend had already turned himself into a mad beast.

Tatsumi: "I don't want you to kill anyone. You know that, right? Jekyll. Master Reiroukan....may be a bad guy. He's hiding the murder incidents after all. But we don't really know what kind of guy he is. And besides......"

Even if he talked directly to his mind, if his crucial mind is blank, then nothing will reach him. He knows that. He knows, so Tatsumi talks to him. He calls out to him. And says it straight out.

Tatsumi: "Your probably planning......to destroy the entire Reiroukan manor. But if you do that, then that girl......"

That black-haired girl that his friend almost killed last night.

It was Saber's presence that allowed the incident to end without injury, and if the sky-silver knight hadn't stopped him there, then his claws might have dug into her. Given his last-minute behaviour, he might have crunched her whole skull with his beast mutated jaws. There was a fairly high percentage of that too.

He couldn't bear it.

Killing a small girl.

Making Berserker do that, without stopping him.

Tatsumi: "......Killing a child, that's not justice. Jekyll."

They really should have talked about it.

Before executing his sixth "raid."

But his words were not enough. Tatsumi had chosen to do this, because he who was a mere high school student didn't think he say could anything to he who was calm and talked so reasonably that a name such as Berserker didn't suit him, to he who possessed much knowledge and experience. He had chosen this.

The strategy remains the same, a single "assault."

He will stop Berserker's fangs and claws with his absolute command right.

Tatsumi: 'By the time we reach the master, Caster will naturally be crushed, so the forest's bounded fields will have vanished. So if I run and descend on the mansion in a rush.....I will speak with the master who should be shaking in front of Berserker. And then, we......'

It's a very convenient idea.

Well that was obvious.

Assuming that everything worked in Tatsumi's and Berserker's favour, that is.

Without being disturbed by Saber like last night, without being disturbed by that awesome beauty Lancer who they encountered at midnight on the day they strolled around Shinjuku, without being disturbed by Archer who shot at Berserker in Akihabara, without being interrupted by Rider who they haven't seen yet, Caster who rules over the black forest will be defeated by Berserker, and then it will be over. It's even equal to a pipe dream that's only convenient for Tatsumi.

Is he overly optimistic?

Optimistic. Tatsumi himself thinks he is being completely optimistic. However.....

Tatsumi: "......Say, you know in Akihabara. I think we got through to that woman a little. That's what I think."

The words he piles on over their telepathy.

Even if they didn't reach his rampaging friend in that storm, he will tell him. After that, he exhales his pure white breath.

He didn't feel cold because he was sweating all over his body.

The rapid consumption of mana that comes with Berserker's activities is continuing even now, as his friend finally approached the middle of the black forest. Tatsumi feels more tired than when he had sprinted for several kilometres. He had already drunk five health drinks and he didn't have enough energy to eat rice balls. There is some dizziness, ahh, he strongly believes it will be life threatening if this keeps ups.

He touches his left shoulder with his right hand.

His Master Degree. Should he use it here? If he saves one stroke, then he'll still have a way to "stop him" at the very end, so he should be able to use up to two strokes. Although his friend had strictly told him to save one for emergencies, tonight is game time. Since Saber showed up last night, they should consider that the Reiroukan mansion has already turned into a battlefield for the Holy Grail War.

???: "Are you gonna use it? Your Master Degree?"

A voice echoed in the room.

It was a pretty voice.

In an empty room where there should be no one but Tatsumi, now, there is certainly the voice of a girl the same age as him.

Tatsumi: "Huh"

What did she say? What did she say?

Her voice. Her words. It was a beautiful that echoed quietly. No. The Master Degree. She said it. She told him that. "Are you gonna use your Master's Degree." That was the gist. Surely! Straightaway, Tatsumi turns around.

Perhaps because of the dizziness, moving his head vigorously badly hurts the back of his temple.

Don't worry. Some of his pain couldn't be helped considering the continuous barrage of lethal magecrafts that his new friend keeps on taking in the black forest. He has been strong against pain since he was a child. However, compared to his little sister and close classmates from when he was little, it wasn't as if it's a trait that especially superior to others.

???: "......What are you doing?

The voice echoes again.
A girl's voice.
Yes, she must be a girl————
There was a girl in an awfully light, white, tight-fitting one-piece dress for this season there. Is her
age from the impression of her voice, about the same or a little younger than Tatsumi? Perhaps
because he was imagining it, but there was a weird bewitching aura.
Even though she's properly dressed.
It's like fragile and ephemeral lingerie.
Bare shoulders and neck, slender long thighs—————and a lively tanned body.
Or was he strangely drawn in by her eyes?
Tatsumi: 'WhaWhat the hell am I thinking!'
His reaction was delayed.
Instantly, he gets confused without knowing what to do.
Think. Remember. What did she say. She must have said something crucial, important. Tatsumi
couldn't recall the memory of just a few seconds ago. He doesn't notice. He doesn't know that his
body which was drenched in a massive amount of sweat under his clothes, his thoughts, were
being corroded by something other than his heavy exhaustion from the mana consumption.
Perhaps even a first-class magus will not notice it as it slowly fills this room, without almost no
sign of magecraft and no traces of mana.
An ordinary person would have fallen at this point
An ordinary person would have fallen at this point.
The girl's figure, her lustrous skin, her very existence that seduces a man just by standing still.
Therefore, it was a kind of miracle that Tatsumi said the following words.
Is it because of the mana consumption that is exceeding the permissible level, or, is because the
magic circuits he inherited via his bloodline lead to some magecraft in his extreme state? Either
way, the result is the same.
way, the result is the same.
Tatsumi: "N, No, um this is uhm"
Instantly.
Tatsumi made a decision based on his own common sense .
That is, the one-piece girl who appeared without a sound is most likely a human
being—————



If so, is she the resident from the apartment next door? There must have been no one there until recently, but she may have come home without him realizing it, and noticed the soliloquy or noise Tatsumi was making as the window was still open.

Then, pitifully, she certainly saw his suspicious figure.

Tatsumi even feels sorry for himself.

Alone, in an empty room. A strange man is looking outside with his binoculars.

With this, he is either a total pervert or a criminal. A pervert or a criminal? No. That's not it. 'I have a goal, I am doing this for that goal, I'm not doing anything like you're imagining, etc.' He will explain himself. At times, he concluded that because he was panicking, his tongue didn't function well and he became incoherent. A decision. He didn't know what he was deciding on. Tatsumi addresses the girl, while making all sorts of blunders.

Fervently.

Desperately.

He endures the mana consumption, and withstands some intervention.

Tatsumi: "Th, at's.....That's why, you shouldn't be here."

He doesn't know what's going on.

He'll try to persuade her using all of his words. Make sure she didn't see him and go home. If possible, stay away from the next room for a little while. It's dangerous. A terrifying existence beyond human knowledge may come here. If the enemy notices that she is here, then surely, right now.....

Tatsumi: "....."

The girl smiles unintentionally.

Thank goodness. She understood.

Assassin: "You're a Master, aren't you?"

Shivers. Chills. Dread.

Right away, Tatsumi tries to manipulate the lifeform with his "right eye,"

but---it doesn't go through.

Maybe because of the mana that has been consumed? Was he out of power? No. No. Even if the remaining amount is small, there is definitely the sensation of his magic circuits working, so he

knows that his "right eye" is trying to function as a mystic eye. It's just not working. On the girl before him. The power that should have restrained the female magus on that night in Akihabara, is being resisted by this girl. That's all.

Tatsumi:	۳	A	Ser	vant!	ľ

The words that his friend spoke many times now revived in his mind.

After that incident on that night in Akihabara, he mentioned it many times per day.
"Avoid danger. Mages are the enemy. Servants too. Humans especially cannot beat the latter. If you encounter one, your mystic eye cannot help you in a real emergency. Don't hesitate next time, use a Master Degree and call me."

Tatsumi: "Stay back."

No good. Stay away.

Tatsumi: "Don't come near me."

It's useless. Anymore, and I will...

Tatsumi: "Don't let me use this. If I use this.....! My friend, my friend will come soonMy friend, he will......! He will surely kill you!"

There was a girl before his eyes.

Her tanned limbs embrace Tatsumi with all their might. Gently, gracefully, as if they are wrapping around him.

Her face is close. He thought she was cute. She may be beautiful. Or both.

'She's going to take a breath,' the moment he thought that..... Her lips-

Assassin: "I'm glad you seem like a kind person."

Gently. Affectionately.

The girl's lips touched his.

At almost the same time, the sensation of something bewitching wriggles and slips within her lipstick.

And then————a ruthless euphoria runs through and melts everything from his spine to his brain.

Or, is it a poison breath caused by Assassin's Noble Phantasm?
Tatsumi: "———"
His final moments. There weren't many things that Tatsumi Kitano had in mind. At most, some profiles.
His new friend. His younger sister. His parents. His close friends. The female classmate in the seat next to him who smiles at him once every three days and who he secretly wanted to confess to someday.
And then

Heat and sweetness.

What do you suppose the reason for it was?

An elementary school girl that he had only just noticed in a residential area in Suginami. A profile with clear eyes that shines in the sun emerges in his mind



Beautiful Mind Arc

Act-4

The God-King's heart is as noble as the sun

A certain day in February, 1991.

In a large-scale magical workshop protected by a multi-layered barrier, underneath the Okutama mountains.

It was a labyrinth-like workshop.

A "safeguarded" fortress built through the collective effort of many mages reaching into the double digits, making it difficult to invade even if it was a mystery as powerful as a Heroic Spirit. Even if one tries to break the various bounded fields with magecraft, a magical trap will obliterate the foolish practitioner as they break one. Physically, innumerable gun turrets attached to the ceilings and walls inside the workshop will pulverise the intruder.

Sturdy and strong.

An indomitable fortress that makes full use of not only magecraft, but firearms and electronic devices too.

It was a workshop that seemed to embody the strategy the clan chose for the Holy Grail War. Indeed, it couldn't possibly compare with the mysterious technique used on the "sanctuary" built by the materialised Caster. Neither the turning of space into a different world nor the placement of fierce traps like the vacuum of space or the scorching heat of the planet's core can rival it. Although it is difficult to destroy Servants who are the cornerstone of the Holy Grail War, it is second to none in terms of thwarting the invasion of outsiders. Whether it is a human army, a group of mages or a Heroic Spirit.

Everything is to protect the head of the clan who was a participant in the Holy Grail War. The dark hall built in the innermost part of the magical workshop. The workshop that had been strengthened to the max to protect Shizuri Isemi, the head of the Isemi clan————a masked old man who wanted to obtain the Holy Grail there in his seat that was like an old king's "throne."

Shizuri: "I will obtain the Grail."

The voice of Elder Shizuri echoes through his mask in the darkness. There are deep profound accumulated feelings in there.

Anger. Indignation. Or a realization of pride?

In fact, the name Isemi as a magecraft lineage was on the verge of collapse over the years. As the Mages Association which was centred on the distant British "Clocktower" looked down on younger lineages, the only Far Eastern family recognised by them was the Reiroukan family. It was absolutely unforgivable. Originally, the history of the Isemi Clan prided itself on their unrivalled length. They allowed this due to the rise of western magecraft lineages who had visited this land at most several centuries ago.

Shizuri: "......Moreover, in the event the Holy Grail, the omnipotent wish granting device falls into the hands of the Reiroukans, our name of Isemi will fade from this land now. Unforgivable. Simply unforgivable."

His mask trembles even more with his voice.

The expressionless mask symbolised the Isemi Clan's current status quo.

A mystic code to supplement their magic circuits which had declined as an effect of accumulating bloodlines, and has the function to replace the mana taken from others with that of the wearer. An original created by the Isemi Clan by fusing a portion of Western Magecraft that had been introduced to the Far East more than a few hundred years ago with modern science. Under the management of the clan, the general hospitals scattered throughout Tokyo have been used to absorb life force from a large number of inpatients, and even now, they continue to consume to maintain the materialisation of the powerful Servant they had successfully summoned.

Mana is directly connected to one's life force. If they keep on stealing it, there will be a considerable number of deaths.

But, Elder Shizuri does not care.

It is an object of regret for him that he does not care how many innocent people die, and that they have to use the power of science which is the same as a taboo for mages. However, Shizuri was worried about his own helplessness who had no choice but to continue the clan while touching the taboo, regardless of the suffering of those whose lives were being undermined at this very moment.

In the bloodline of a magus who respects old mysteries, science is.....

Horrible to put into words. But he has to endure it. He has to fight. Shizuri: "I will put the Holy Grail hidden in Tokyo into these hands. At that time, we who hath lost the grace of the ancient "Snake of Ise," reached out to Western magecraft and poured the sins of the clan which got involved in ill-suited science down on-They have to fulfill the ambition of one thousand years of mages, and let them know that the Isemi are the greatest family in the world, let alone the Far East. They must take back the shame of the mages who reached out to mysteries of science, as well as the honour and glory of the Isemi Clan who is looked down upon as a puny transient lineage. Solemnly, the elder continues his speech. Shizuri: "Therefore, I beseech you. O' Heroic spirit summoned by my ritual, obtain the Holy Grail by any means necessary!" Each and every word contained the clan's regrets and dearest wishes-However. Rider: "What a small vessel, how boring." Those were the words that he spat out. It was a solemn and absolute verdict, as if it resounded from the heavens. It was a cruel and heartless scorn, as if it had arrived from the underworld. While standing in front of Elder Shizuri's gaze, he is wrapped in the sign of a dazzling ————a voice brought forth from the man with the eyes of the sun. It would be a little different to describe it as contempt. For this man, a man who wore golden ornaments and white robes over his tanned skin, all beings were no match for himself, but just one of the "citizenry." It was no different for the masked old man seated on the imitation throne. Rider: "How stupid. And, ahh, above all else laughable." While firing off words, the man-

Among his many subjects, there are sometimes those who seem to have suffered from stupidity. Even after thousands of years, there will be almost no change in the people who fill the earth.

Rider who had just achieved materialisation right then, thinks a little.

Was it the same in all ages?

With only small devices that are too small for his hands, there is nothing that shines or catches his eves.

Citizens. Soldiers. Generals too. Even the kings of various nations who govern the people, not just the Pharaohs, are not so different.

Therefore———

The fact that the person is an ordinary person, does not infuriate him as a pharaoh.

But. Ah, but then.

If they want to reach the heavens without discerning their place, then he needs to punish the little ones as the sun, as a god, as a being that rivalled Amen and Mut. Punishment. In other words, death.

The arrogance and disrespect towards himself, a god on earth, is worthy of absolute death.

Rider: "Magus who dwells in this far eastern land. You must have used a catalyst to summon me. It will do you well to reveal it. What did you use for the catalyst? Was it the remnants of my bow or chariot that I used during my decisive battle with the Hittite King, or was it an inscription of the treaty that I made with the Hittites, or was it something plundered from my very own mummy?"

All of the items he spoke of, were items filled with tremendous mysteries because they were old. it is not unfathomable what kind of enormous power they might have, such as the remains of one who was worshipped as pharaoh or a god on earth drawn by a world where he sat as God and who envisioned a united world, or in particular, the world's oldest anti-aggression

treaty————an inscription that the King himself wrote for the peace treaty between their two great nations, so they would be a coveted target for mages.

He could not see the expression on Elder Shizuri's face who received the words of the man who resembled rebuke and denunciation. Because of the mask.

The old man just shakes his head.

Of course, neither mystery can be a catalyst for Rider who had materialised beneath the Okutama Mountains.

The only thing that can materialise him, the greatest Heroic Spirit in Ancient Egypt which was full of mysteries, as a Servant of the Holy Grail War, was the relics associated with her who was favoured by him.

Shizuri: "...... It is as you've surmised, great Pharaoh. We used the last necklace worn by Queen Nefertari as a catalyst during your summoning."

Rider: "I see."

Silence. And then.....

Rider: "Haha! You've researched me well. Certainly, I am attracted to the scent of my beautiful Nefertari, my one who shines like the sun, rather than an object derived from myself!"

With a big laugh—————

The man's eyes instantly shine sharply.

His very large murderous gaze slammed against the throne.

At the same time, Uraeus fired from the end of his genuine Noble

Phantasm————Mesektet which only had its shining bow manifested in the subterranean space, and easily gouged out the space surrounding Elder Shizuri.

An intense light and an explosive sound.

There was no point to the quadruple Bounded Fields that were set up during the summoning of the mighty Heroic Spirit.

It breaks the field. The transparent bulletproof glass that secretly separated the Elder from Rider also shatters, and the thick wall that should've been magically protected is also demolished along with the iron outer shell. Even this underground workshop, which has the aspect of a shelter designed for the potential outbreak of a nuclear war during the Cold War, will immediately be annihilated if the Solar Barque exerts its true power.

The old man who fell off his throne sees it.

The figure of a brilliant person who slowly walks to his side.

The appearance of an angry king, as if death incarnate had taken human form.

It was neither the successful defence of his Bounded Fields made by the clan's mages nor a happenstance of good luck that the old man is still alive. The daring action by Rider who judged that it would not be a punishment to vaporise him in one blow, only slightly took the life of Elder Shizuri.

Rider: "How dull."

Chillingly.

Rider tells him while covered in splendour.



Rider: "If you defiled my beloved queen's place of rest, would you have imagined your own end? Choose. Will you be devoured by my divine beast or will you be erased with all of your clan here?Oh, but don't think of using your Command Seal. It is much faster for my light to burn you here than for your words to reach me."

Shizuri: "Y-you......are you abandoning your wish to the Grail......?"

Rider: "I rather do that than dance in the palm of a disrespectful cur. Now, choose."

Two alternatives. Will both of them end the same way?

An absolutely inevitable death sentence.

Elder Shizuri fainted twice in three seconds, catching the mass of murderous intent that poured through his gaze as if it was a physical shock, and no, he couldn't take it. Too laughable, too stupid, too powerless to endure the fear of murder and violence. However, this is also a natural situation. Unless one has an innate royal spirit, lowly people like mages cannot withstand the royal aura of this Rider.

Nevertheless, However.

The old man woke up twice by the automatic function of his mystic code which activates his mana, and just before he fell into a fainting state for the third time, he kept himself conscious by using his own magecraft.

Rider: "Oh. You have guts for a magus. Or are you planning on savouring the moment of your death while keeping your consciousness clear?"

Shizuri: "..... Neither."

While exhaling a rough breath, Elder Shizuri speaks slightly.

- "I won't ask you to forgive my insolence."
- "I've long since resigned myself to be killed."
- "To fulfill the great ambition of all mages."
- "To display the power of the Isemi Clan."
- 'That is why, I've summoned you who is like Amen and Amon————'

Rider: "I see."

Only two seconds between receiving the old man's words and Rider's reply.

To the Isemi Clan it was two seconds which could be said to be the height of good fortune.

After showing a reflective manner, the brilliant man bumped off his solar barque, his noble phantasm suspended in the space off to somewhere, and announced while pretentiously flapping

his white robes. While looking down at Shizuri Isemi's eyes which were enticing an expression through his mask really coldly.

Rider: "I am glory, I am the heavens, I am magnanimous. Your life is in my hands for now. You said you have resigned yourself. Then, let me see for myself the worth of your clan and whether those feelings and wishes meet the wishes of my Master?"

	—But. If it is trivial.
	——Know that you and your clan will immediately be burned by my glory and
evaporate.	



About siege battles in the Holy Grail War.
Siege battles in this case indicates a strategy where the
Master sits in their workshop and doesn't show up at all.
Servants are so powerful that at first glance, it makes sense
to avoid encounter battles and stay locked up in their
workshops.

No matter how many battles you win, it doesn't make sense for a Master to get hurt and die.

It will certainly be crucial to protect one's own life.

However, except for the Caster Class, Servants are not suitable for siege battles.

Once their whereabouts are known, the enemy camp will eventually be rushed.

It would be difficult to protect it without a powerful temple-class workshop.

Furthermore, even if only the Heroic Spirits are activated outside of the workshop and strive to defeat the enemy camp, even if it's not impossible——to win through Servant battles without the magical assistance of a magus or strengthening them with a Command Seal, it would simply put you at a disadvantage.

Even if one wins a battle by using a Noble Phantasm....

The act of continuing to fight other camps with one Servant where the nature of your Heroic Spirit and the information of

their Noble Phantasm has become revealed carries a great danger to it.

In light of these facts. Siege battles are suitable tactics for the Caster camp.

Except---When the summoned servant is extremely powerful.

If they are a great hero who does not need the assistance of a magus, and has unwavering combat power even when encountering multiple enemy camps at the same time. Even if the information on their Noble Phantasm is revealed, if they can crush the enemy with overwhelming power.

Then all a magus has to do is stay in their workshop and leave the whole battle to the Heroic Spirits --Such tactics also carry a little more realism to them.

(An excerpt from an old notebook)



Certainly, it was a labyrinth-like subterranean workshop.

Surprisingly, the lighting was thorough and almost no darkness could be found in most of the underground space built with concrete materials. Was it only dark during his summoning earlier? First, this had a slight positive impression. Brightness is indispensable to Rider, so if by any chance, this subterranean workshop is defined as his own "territory," it was not very suited for it in the inside, such as being full of darkness and being as if it was the dead of night.

Rider: "But it's so bright....What is this?"

The mineral structure reminded him of the inside of a tomb.

Pharaohs before him would have felt something there, but for him, it rather had the opposite effect on him.

During his lifetime, he did not attach much importance to his own royal tomb.

Rider: "It's like he bought it for my own displeasure."

The lighting was good.

However, it is frustrating to go out of your way to hide yourself in a place that was like a tomb. Even so, as he said he would see it for himself, he would be breaking his word if he destroyed it immediately. Fairness is his natural bearing as a Pharaoh, thus, Rider walks around the subterranean workshop while conscious of his earlier deferment.

He didn't pass by that many people, but in general, the members of the Isemi clan in the subterranean workshop were dressed in lab coats which were the attire worn by scholars and doctors in this era of the 20th century. The "minimum knowledge" that comes from the Grail conveys the current state of the era, but no information was provided about a magus who is the embodiment of mysteries, dressing like a scholar or doctor who has mastered a science that was on the cutting-edge of civilisation.

While watching the twelfth p	erson counting bowing respectfully to him, Rider tilts his head and
stares at the state of the seven	th large hospital room.
I see	
He nods approvingly, while r	emembering some of his satisfactions.

The room he was looking into was filled with large computers.

.———Hmph "

Machines created by real modern civilisation, not the mystic codes and ritual tools assembled through alchemy. That which was a large film-type storage medium that makes a lot of noise and spins, was probably what they called a supercomputer, according to the knowledge automatically conferred to him.

The other rooms were similar. Some even seemed like Homunculi culture tanks connected to modern civilisation like machines.

Rider: "According to the masked old man's speech, at least."

This clan seemed to have somewhat conformed to modern science, which is quite rare for a
magus. Rather, he could say—————that they improved on the magecraft theory
which cannot be expected to develop further, by supplementing it with modern science which
should be rightfully avoided by mages
It was also very humorous.
They attempted and achieved "fusion" of modern science and magecraft—

Speaking of which, it sounds good, but from Rider's point of view, it's just a pitiful word. Was it something like fusion? It is nothing than the act of further fraying by making up for the mysteries they lack with machines, and then the further fraying is repeated as a supplement.

Rider: "How ugly."

Originally, he never thought mages were beautiful.

There were similar people in his lifetime, and there were some practitioners among his vassals, but most of them were in the world as an assembly of hermits estranged from the world. Foolishness like the unthinkable natural act of citizens prostrating to the Pharaoh was not uncommon. Of course, it's unclear if the magus lineages in Ancient Egypt has remained till today but their habits will probably not have changed much over time.

Even on that premise, the Isemi Clan's way of life was even more ugly.

It's as if they are struggling to escape, before they perished

At the time of his death, he recalled how he lamented his death.

Rider: "Shall I burn them?"

In that moment, he wondered if he should take action with the words he muttered. Rider stepped into a certain room.

It was a white room. It was a room filled with especially strong light, even among the various rooms in the subterranean workshop illuminated by the fluorescent modern lights and the lights that were too white. He carefully observes the room, squinting slightly.

He simply thought with irritation, 'Are they ever going to burn out?'

There was an object that caught his eye. He sets aside all of the thoughts and feelings from just before.

Beyond his gaze----

There was a single small person lying on a bed.

It was a little child connected to machines of various sizes by numerous cables.

Was it after some torture? Rider could read at a glance that a majority of their body had some kind of deficiency. The deficiency extended not only to his limbs but also to their internal organs. He looks at the instruments embedded in some of the machines and reads the information on them. Apparently, the child was sick from birth.

He couldn't read their age.

Four, five years old? It was hard to imagine to that their condition will lead to proper growth. It may be doubtful whether their age matches their appearance. On the contrary, it was a miracle

that he was now alive considering how some of his vital organs were no longer functioning, but it appeared they were kept barely alive by the Isemi's technology which messily combined magecraft and science.

He probably also had magic circuits to add to his sorrow.

If they are a magecraft lineage that is falling to ruin, those who inherit the magic circuit from their parents, will use whatever method to at least pass it on to the next generation. Even if a disease causes unbearable pain to their young one with each pulse and breath.

Child: "......"

Rider looked into the child's eyes.

The little child opens their eyelids, and looks back at the brilliance of the sun with their pale eyes. There were no words.

Strangely, it didn't feel disrespectful.

Rider: "You, your name?"

There was no reply.

Only a painful young breath echoes through the plastic breathing device.

It was a little frustrating, but Rider didn't want to punish him. If the information on the instruments he read was correct, the boy is under a heavy a burden at this moment. He can see that it was considerate even if he did not know whether it was pain or suffering.

Therefore, he was interested in him.

What did this person think while being so affected by this disease?

Rider: "I am a great pharaoh. If you pray to the heavens as my subject, I shall listen and grant you, my mercy."

Quietly, Rider tells the child.

In short. "If you wish it, I will kill you right away."

Of course, he consider death to be peaceful. He didn't consider it, but-

Child: "...... I have something to wish for."

A trembling voice reaches through his breathing device.

Child: "For the people....."

The sound was too weak.

Child: ".....of the world, to be......happy......."
Rider: "What?"

He couldn't believe his ears at the child's words.

At the same time, he felt for this little child who uttered a voice while hiding his deathly disease. It was his aura. Not one unique to mages. It was not something like mana, or magic circuits, or magic crests, no, or the power he emits or his clearly existing organs. It was more obscure and incomprehensible, but more than anything, it could be sensed by Rider.

The spirit of a king, no.

The temperament of a warrior, no.

Magical talent, no. It cannot be something so lowly!

That was a day in the distant, distant past.

Of course, this was long before he was summoned as a Heroic Spirit in this world of the 20th Century.

It was when he still had ka and a clear body. Just a little before he rose as pharaoh with his father, King Seti. And although he was a boy, he was recognised as crown prince and given the throne of Geb, was entrusted with the construction of the temple of Abydos, the place of the god Osiris' resurrection, and gained political experience as the viceroy of Nubia.

On the banks of the pure Nile River.

Soon, he forgot about military and political affairs and smiled with the two who loved him more than anyone.

Nefertari: "Since when, did the three of us start meeting like this?"

Having said that, the shy one was his beloved girl.

The beautiful maiden, Nefertari, who would be accepted as his queen a few years later.

His partner who continually gave him her genuine utmost love and respect in their life by letting him have many women and children, with his four princesses, six concubines and hundreds of lovers. Out of all of them, she was the most beautiful and unmistakable best of the lot.

He can clearly remember her like this. This lovely figure was truly...... The goddess herself.

He remembered being very surprised when he learned that she had exchanged letters with the Hittite Queen Puduhepa who was his fated enemy. He heard Nefertari and Queen Puduhepa was happy about the peace treaty he closed with the Hittites. While showing the courage to stand on the battlefield herself, she is truly filled with love and her heart shines brightly on the ground like a flower.

Moses: "It's great that both of you are in good health. I'm glad we are able to talk like this."

And.

The one who spoke quietly was his dearest friend.

A Naruna boy⁶ who was found on the banks of the Nile by his beautiful and compassionate late mother, and raised with himself. He was the only unrivalled brother on this earth who had the talent and the character fit to stand on par with himself who will rule this earth as Pharaoh.

He was a boy with white skin unique to the Naruna people, not tanned skin like themselves. If he wasn't an adopted child, but a child born from his mother's womb, and if his skin colour was not so white and transparent, then King Seti would have definitely given his brother the throne of Geb as crown prince. If that had happened, he would have decided to help his brother as a brave general, albeit with some jealousy.

He certainly loved his brother so much that he could think so from the bottom of his heart.

Moses: "I think, it'd be nice if people everywhere were happy."

He thinks it was this boy, his brother's favourite saying. It was the same that day.

The boy said, while rejoicing at their reunion.

⁶ Naruna: means "youth or soldiers" in Egyptian Hierogylphs. It also comes from Ne'arim the Jewish word for boys, young men and men. Apparently soldiers were also made up of slaves too in Ancient Egypt too. So I went with Naruna people for the translation.

^{**}The Egyptians employed, inter alia, a contingent of the 'Naruna of Amurru' (an elite infantry corps designated by the Canannite-Hebrew term (ne'arim)....." (Malamat, Tadmor, 1976, A History of the Jewish People, Harvard University Press, USA, pg. 23)



the gods the Naruna people serve, are surely wishing for the same thing too."

Ramesses: "Ohh. So you claim to understand the hearts of pharaohs and the gods, even though

He asked his brother who tended to dream.

you're not a pharaoh?"

Although he is honoured to be smarter than anyone else, in truth, he realized that this brother of his was much more knowledgeable and was looking at the larger picture. Which is why, although these words had some ridicule in them, it wasn't malicious. Maybe if you say so. He had at least half of that feeling.

Nefertari: "Oh Ramesses, don't be so mean," Nefertari smiles.

Ramesses: "What're you saying? This isn't being mean." Well, at least half of it wasn't.

Moses: "The next pharaoh is definitely going to be you, Ramesses. You who will ascend to the same position as the gods, no, even the god Amen, will be the greatest pharaoh of all time.

......And, I should know because I know your heart somewhat."

Ramesses: "So it has come to that?"

After saying that, ahh, he also smiles.

Indeed. Besides Nefertari, only you knows my heart. And the young man who was his brother talked.

"Soon a great pharaoh will rise anew."

"To give joy, peace and tranquillity, and stability to all who live on this earth————"

Moses: "You can give joy to even the Hittites ."

Ramesses: "You're exaggerating. I'm confident I can win wars, but......."

Moses: "You can do it. I'm telling you that you're not just anyone. Listen, you will be

Ozymandias beloved by everyone in the world!"

Ramesses: "You can easily say it, because, you don't know war yet."

Nefertari: "No, Ramesses. It's strange, but I think it's the same thing."

Ramesses: "Nefertari, you tend to dream. What do you two think of me?"

Nefertari: "You are you after all," the girl smiles again.

Moses: "Yes, I'm telling you because you are you," the young man smiles as well.

That day. At that time.

Beside his beloved girl, he listened to the words of his dear brother.

Some of the feelings that sprung up in his heart were—————

Joy, honour, and pride.

Later, against his brother who had decided to part ways with him with a decisive split after he truly rose as pharaoh, against Moses who was destined to split apart the great sea and depart to Israel while leading an almost great number of Naruna people, it was the first moment in his life where he certainly felt a sacred being that was not the pharaoh.

There was no way he could forget.

Even after the hostility and separation, he still remembered it even now after his life once ended. The face and voice of the young man who wished happiness to all the people in the world

Rider: "Is there a person like you nowadays who has experienced the same amount of time as eternity too?"

Rider whispered.

At a corner of the underground workshop. In a room lit by dazzling white lights, he gently smiles instinctively at the child who cannot move about while still connected by cables.

Rider: "To think, I would hear those same words again after three thousand several hundred years. Rejoice, bound child. With your existence, the Isemi Clan has been allowed to live."

There was no reply.

The child seemed to have lost consciousness before the pain.

Perhaps even in their dream, this small one will continue to think of words he spoke earlier, while suffering and feeling pain.

_____Just like Rider's dearest friend.



About communication with Heroic Spirits.

As mentioned before, building relationships between Masters and Servants is crucial.

Heroic Spirits summoned by a function of the Holy Grail have a wish.

Basically, Masters and Servants are connected in the point of "winning the Holy Grail War," but relying on that fact is a dangerous word.

A function of the Holy Grail gives Mages Master Degrees with enormous magical power.

Master Degrees are also an absolute command right to a Servant, but when considering them as a strategy / tactic, one aspect of them "ability reinforcement" should be embhasized.

It is way too dangerous to use a Master Degree as an "coerced action" against a relationship discrepancy.

As I've mentioned many times, know that it is a bad move to do so.

The moment you do so, your mutual relationship is decisively broken.

Use the Master Degree to only strengthen your Heroic Spirit.

Although it is an example of a possibility——

If you fail to build a smooth relationship, consider using others.

Even if they are incompatible with the Master themselves, if they hit it off with one of the Master's relatives, the probability that a Servant will immediately rebel should decrease.

Of course, it is an armchair theory .

Placing others, especially relatives of the family, near the Master during the Holy Grail War should be considered dangerous and is never recommended.

I will state it again.

Do not challenge the Holy Grail War with your children beside you.

Unless you aren't in a situation where the aforementioned siege battle can be established.

It should not be considered as an option.

(An excerpt from an old notebook)



Somewhere in the darkness.

There are people talking.

A gorgeous girl and a quiet wise man.

One can't tell what darkness lay inside them now.

The only thing one can say is—————

It could only be about the huge "cup," deep underneath Tokyo there.

No, is it really a cup?

Wasn't it a "cauldron" that moves like the pits of darkness itself??

Man: "Lady Manaka. I'm afraid to report."

Manaka: "What is it, Caster? Did you find out something interesting?"

Caster: "I've identified the Phantasmal Species that attacked you and Saber, the other day."

Manaka: "That cat, huh? It wasn't very cute."

Caster: "That is—————a Divine Beast. In Ancient Egypt, the Sphinx was known as an incarnation of the sky god Horus and existed as a manifestation of raging winds and fire. Of course, you probably know this without me having to tell you."

Manaka: "A sphinx, what about it?"

Caster: "The true identity of Rider who controls it, in all probability, is likely a pharaoh from Ancient Egypt."

Manaka: "Hmm."

Caster: "There's a possibility to talk with him before then. If Rider's true name is as I suspected, then aside from you, Saber will be at a slight disadvantage. Needless to say, Assassin will be annihilated without even moving."

Manaka: "Oh. My Saber will be fine. After all, his holy sword is the brilliance of the stars. People's wishes. No matter if they are God or Devil, they are no match against it."

Caster: ".....Maybe so, that is if he can wield the holy sword."

Manaka: "Huh?"

Caster: "I've taken some measures. Think of it as insurance. In the face of a brilliant pharaoh, even if he is a "Great King," the best and ideal plan is needed——————to hope for a sure-fire win."

Manaka: "Hmm. That's fine, I'll leave it to you."

Caster: "As you wish."

The wise man bows deeply towards the girl.

That appearance was like a servant addressing the king of the world.



And then-

Six days after Rider's materialisation.

Two days after slaughtering Berserker in a flash bombing from the skies above the Reiroukan Manor.

A magnificent and majestic large structure appeared in Tokyo Bay at night.

A super large temple complex.

Clad in countless lights, like a sea of stars falling into the ocean from the night sky.

The "tip" of the temple who stretched for several kilometres, destroyed the artficial island under construction.

Miraculously, zero people died.

No, he was careful to ensure there was no dead for the time being. Rider, the true owner and ruler of the temple made sure to do so.

Right, this transcendent temple structure is the existence that embodied Rider's mental image and the might of his lifetime.

This was his greatest divine might.

This was his most powerful Noble Phantasm.

A miraculous reality marble, that could freely rewrite reality.

By further mixing "composite temples consisting of multiple temples" such as the Dendera temple complex and the Karnak temple complex, and combining them with giant temples and mausoleums such as the great temple of Abu Simbel and the Ramesseum, a strange looking large temple complex which cannot exist in reality has been established.

The strange-looking structure which combines even the temples he had never worked on in his lifetime, correctly demonstrates his prestige which proclaimed that all temples, past, present and future are for him.

That's why, prior to being Rider, he was a Pharaoh, who disregarded all of the legends and stories preached by the priests, captured the world from his own perspective, captivated myths and grasped and worshipped the gods.

Truly everything in the world belonged to him, and its prosperity and happiness belonged to him as well.

However.....

Still, there was something that couldn't be granted.

Rider: "......No one in this world mourns as much as they should when they die."

In the "throne room" of the main temple which was in the innermost temple complex——————

Rider closes his eyes in his shining, elevated and more than anything, authentic throne, that was incomparable to the one quietly set up in the dark underground by the Isemi clan.

Rider: "I am supreme, perfect and absolute. I must be eternal. My tragedy is that I was mortal. Like other pharaohs, my powerlessness had no choice but to conquer the journey to God, while dreaming of my rebirth at the end of distant time."

There was no one to listen to his speech.

To be correct, what Rider was announcing were his words to God. Words towards himself.

Rider: "Therefore, I shall seek life from the Holy Grail. Surely, I must reign as the master of the world.So, I ask. Is this present-day world, the world that I deserve to rule?"

It will be a world he can enjoy.

At least, it's not so bad if he only looks at the battles.

Archer, Lancer, and Saber. They are only given the common name, "The Three Knights" by the Mages Association, and they are fairly powerful Heroic Spirits. For him who had achieved victory in numerous battles, he was confident that he could get the same elation as when he faced off with the Hittite army in the Levant region from them.

However, that alone is meaningless.

Battle was good. He liked it.

He even thought it was okay to face those heroes with his double-edged dagger, his favoured sword, without using his Noble Phantasms, but he was no longer satisfied with just battle. Most of all, his beloved Nefertari wasn't here.

Rider had been shaking slightly for the past few days.
And then————
Rider: "I'll admit it now."
He smiles for the first time since he was summoned. The first time was in a room in the subterranean workshop. When he received the words of the child with the achievements of a saint. The second time was in the estate of the Reiroukan family. When he felt the existence of a girl with the traits of a ruler.
Rider: "There are saints and kings in this era too!"
And, while foreseeing his decisive battle with the sky silver knight who was doing damage all over the place. With a loud laugh—————
Rider: "Hahahahahahahahahahahahahahahahahahaha Fine! I admit it! It beckons me! This place is
no different from the world I ruled, and I am certainly obsessed with it! I want it! Why you ask,
because this world is destined to be ruled over by me!"
With a loud cry. A faint number of rays which were reminiscent of a magic circuit, started running one by one from the throne to the ceiling, walls and floors of the innermost main temple. The darkness of the main temple is instantly filled with the light of mana. At this time, at this moment, Rider's greatest Noble Phantasm, the Ramesseum Tentyris truly activates. A myriad of the inner temples activate their bounded fields from their corresponding gods, the stone Sphinxes awaken and the grand "Great Lightbulb Dendera" turned into the wrath of heaven itself as it began to ring.
Rider: "By me————By Ozymandias, the king of kings!"
Rider laughs loudly while proudly screaming his true name. Ozymandias——————
In other words, one who is born from the god, Ra . Horus . Child of Amen , one born from Mut .

In the era of the 20th century, is the world enough for him to come back to life?

Is it worth the fight?

A bull sparkling with victory, a protector of Egypt beloved by Maat, a conqueror of foreign lands,

boasting of great victories over the years, the lord of both countries, one who rules the universe, Ramesses, one loved by Amen, Usermaatre Setepenre.

The name of the greatest and strongest pharaoh who ruled over the Ancient Egyptian world, in one thousand several hundred years BC.

When he speaks his true name, the whole world must prostrate themselves underneath his radiance.

Past. Present. And even in the future, it wouldn't change, and that was his pride. Tokyo Bay is dyed with light.

Rider: "Anat and Set, it is good that you dwell in my arms! Ashtart, you shall congratulate me with a land bloodied by battles after the glory of my victory! I who am Horus and Ra, shall hence forth, obtain life again and bestow happiness to the world! O' my beloved Nefertari, bless the call of Ozymandias as Hathor!"

The world must be personally ruled by him.

That is divine providence.

He must save the world himself.

Even if one of these Far Eastern cities is reduced to ashes by the brilliance of destruction from the sky.

Whether or not all of them reaches the temple. If they want to keep hiding in the capital while despicably using innocent people as shields, then Rider - Ozymandias will pour mana into the Giant Lightbulb and release "light and lightning" from the temple's main gun untill all of them are mowed down.

Or was it already too late.

If something comes from beyond the sea, then he will point his gunports there!

Rider: "It is truly a battle to save the world! I'll burn all of my enemies and save everything in order for me to rule it!"

Now. Come.
Potnia Theron protected by the sky silver knight.
Now is the time for the God-King to kill you





Beautiful Mind Arc

Act-5

Manaka strikes the Rider's Camp workshop!	
——————————————————————————————————————	

It was a sensational dance.

It was a passionate dance.

Her smooth body moves through the thin cloth that sticks tightly to her limbs.

Beads of sweat float around her openly exposed skin from her bare back, hips, sides of her torso to her arms, sparkling while receiving the slight light.

Her skin is naturally brown.

On her face is a white mask.

There is no expression on the mask made to imitate a skull, and that drifting sensation is that of death.

She was still going strong.

The seductiveness of her physical limbs and the lewdness of her dancing. Had nothing against the eeriness of her one and only mask.

A certain day in February, exactly in 1991.

There was the figure of Assassin, in the ground below the Okutama Mountains, in the middle of a large-scaled magecraft workshop that was supposed to be an indomitable fortress that made full use of magecraft and modern science. Did she come alone? No. Assassin appeared in the workshop along with a pretty girl she had designated as her master.

Indeed, she had truly come to know her Master's marvellous techniques.

Despite the numerous bounded fields and gun turrets, even the great magic that would've otherwise strongly block the invasion of Servants was easily nullified. As she dances in the dim light, Assassin did not feel any discomfort. Far from squeaking, her transient body composed of ether did not feel any damage, resistance or burden from her bouncing hips to one of her fingertips slicing down the air.

Assassin was certainly prepared to some extent when she was informed by her master that she would be infiltrating the workshop of the Isemi Clan———— a sect of Far Eastern mages based in the mountains and whose leader was a participant in the Holy Grail War. Even though she is a being beyond human intelligence, she was summoned into the lowest class in the Servant rankings, and it is not always safe to step into a workshop that has been carefully prepared to the extent that they persist with a siege battle.

But. There was nothing.

There was nothing that prevented her from walking and dancing.

All of it was due to the miraculous magecraft made by her master's handiwork.

Like a butterfly flapping its wings, or a flower blooming, her master does everything.

Assassin: "-------Please, leave this place to me. My Master."

Immediately after she carried out her infiltration.

Yes, she quietly tells the girl.

Assassin began what she was supposed to do. She had begun to dance.

It's really easy to destroy a large-scale underground magecraft workshop that is completely shut down from the inside. All she had to do was enter the air conditioning control room and then dance. The "poisonous sweat" that flowed down from Assassin's body as she dances wildly volatilizes, and the "poisonous air" that is generated scatters to every corner of the vast underground workshop through the air conditioners—————

Compared to direct contact, the concentration of toxins is much lower.

Because it is through the mucus membranes such as the lips, that makes Assassin's poison such a deadly attack method.

Even so. If she keeps dancing and sweating. If the target has not taken anti-poison methods, if it is an organism that carries out life activities by breathing, then their limbs will be paralysed first, their heartbeat will become scattered with all of their thoughts, eventually leading to a slow death. No one in this workshop, underneath the Okutama mountains, can escape.

No difference between old and young. No differe between men and women. Those named Isemi will be annihilated overnight. Even those who can be the candidate for the Holy Grail War————a magus who had magic circuits in their body, even those without talent for magecraft, all those who were in the labyrinth-like workshop will only die.

They will die. That is already completely determined.

The reason for it——————
Was because of the Master of Rider, the Heroic Spirit seated on Tokyo Bay, and his clan.
Because of their affiliation to a Holy Grail War participant.
No, those things don't mean much in the moment of this dance.
Even if the result was the same.
For now at this moment, Assassin was dancing in such delight —————

It had no.....meaning.

Only the pure feelings dedicated to her master are here.

The height of joy that was guided by only the fact that she can do something for this girl. When she said that she wanted her to leave this place to her, it was because she wanted this joy. She wants her to see it. Herself. The performance that she once showed to countless hostile foreign lords and generals, as she numbed the bodies of her assassination targets when she had a body and a proper life, this which was just the preparation to tilt their thoughts to a sexual

direction————her poisonous dance, which had been sublimated into the Dance Macabre itself now.

I want to do something for you, even if I am powerless.'

That was it. If she closes her eyes, she can remember it endlessly.

The countless nights of past days where she danced before someone she approached to kill. Was it so intoxicating?

Although not as powerful as the poisonous body she had in her lifetime, most men will inhale the volatile poison, blunt their thoughts and be covered like beasts, as long as she was allowed to dance at close-range.

It didn't matter whether they were a suspicious lord, or a famous commander healthy both in mind and body.

Sometimes, she took down women in the same way.

Therefore, no-one. No difference between men and women.

Few people saw this dance to the real last step.

Until now.

Manaka: "You're so pretty, Assassin."

She can hear a pretty voice.



Ahh
Only you can watch this dance without breaking your smile.
Manaka: "Yes. Yes, it's wonderful. Seeing you dance like this, it's like you're a foreign flower that blooms at night."
Out of the corner of her eyes, she could see the innocent smile of Manaka Sajou, her supreme master.
Purer than anyone, and with the most precious sparkle than anyone
At the same time. The fact that her body is being poisoned somewhere————and
although she felt that there were some screams and cries that seemed to indicate their deathly fate
it wasn't something that she should especially bear in mind. She cannot stop her dance that scatters sweat that embodies her dynamic feelings.
But, for some reason—————
Someone suddenly came to mind. An opponent she killed, though she didn't know how many people she killed since her materialisation. He wouldn't be an adult, a young boy. Was he a young man? He was telling her something weird. A man who was the Master of Berserker, who she kissed three days ago.
What was he saying? Certainly, she felt like he was saying something weird. She vaguely remembers that it was like a bad joke. It was a phrase that was even brilliant past the humour, when he told her in the midst of killing each other.
Tatsumi: "Don't let me use this]."
As she keeps dancing————
The poisonous girl remembers his words only a little.
He was a strange young man.
If he chose a sacrificial death to imitate a saint.
Could she say that aside from being a magus who controls a Heroic Spirit, he excelled at being a kind of clown?

Assassin: 'A clown, huh?'

It suited she who wore a mask and danced in ecstasy. At least, more so than that young man.



About a base raid.

In the Holy Grail War, it is expected that the base of an enemy Master will be a workshop in many cases. A magical workshop. In the original sense, it will be a facility prepared for lifelong research, but in the case of the Holy Grail War, a magus will be able to demonstrate its aspect as a fortress where they have exhausted their inner mysteries.

A Master's workshop which is guaranteed to be powerful sacred place is extremely impregnable.

There is also a good chance that a bounded field has been set up to prevent the invasion of magical beings such as Servants.

In that case, the Servant will be considerably exhausted if the forced invasion is carried out.

Therefore, it is crucial to destroy the bounded field or alleviate the effects associated with the bounded field.

Servants possess absolute combat strength.

In other words, if they can be safely delivered to the target point——the place where the Master sits, the base raid will be successful no matter how strong the fortress is.

For example, the temporary strengthening of a Servant or teleportation by using a Master Degree.

Even if you do not rely on their unique abilities such as their skills or Noble Phantasms, choosing these trump cards will dramatically increase the chances of a successful attack.

Be careful.

Don't hesitate to use a trump card when attacking the base.

At the same time----

When defending your bases, always consider the possibility of being easily breached depending on the preparedness and abilities of the enemy camp. Since the Holy Grail War is a mutual slaughter, we have no choice but to challenge it on the premise that all situations are possible.

(An excerpt from an old notebook)



Many humans were dead.

Old people.

Young people.

Children too.

Men, women, ordinary humans, humans with magic circuits, all of them were dead.

It wasn't death due to pain. However, many of the dead had died with a strong expression of fear, probably because they lost their lives while clearly realizing that they and everything around them were dying.

The only exception were the mages.

Many of them died with pain and suffering stuck to their faces.

Why?

It was because they owned an anti-poison mystic code. As a result of the girl's handiwork to make some changes to Assassin's poison, "just in case," the toxins sensed the presence of magic circuits and immediately changed and altered them, and at the same time it came into contact with the mages' bodies, their magic circuits were recombined into a circuit of absolute death.

As a result, the underground workshop was filled with silence.

No one could make a sound.

The quiet sound of the girl and Assassin walking down the corridor only echoes intermittently. To there—————

???: "Lady Manaka. With all due respect, its Caster."

Manaka: "Oh. what is it?

Caster: "As you may have already guessed, I would like to report that your actions were successful in the decisive battle on Tokyo Bay. Rider has lost his Master and has been cut off from his mana supply. With such a huge Noble Phantasm, it will consume his considerable mana and Rider will soon be killed."

Manaka: "Is that so?"

Caster: "Is there something troubling you?"

Manaka: "That Pharaoh is very strong and may have an ace up their sleeve. Oh, and. I wasn't the one that made this place fall."

Caster: "Wha----"

Manaka: "It was Assassin. This child worked really hard. There there, you're amazing, amazing."

Caster: "You jest?"

Manaka: "Oh, why?"

Caster: "If the subterranean workshop in Okutama is a den of mages, there may be many mages dressed in mystic codes against poison, right? Those can be killed at best by one without

magecraft."

Manaka: "I helped with the rest......"

Caster: "But still....."

Manaka: "Geez. Caster, don't pick on Assassin too much, okay"

Caster: "My apologies, Lady Manaka."

Manaka: "Keep on helping Saber. Do your job properly until you can confirm the Reality Marble has completely disappeared. It's your plan after all, right?"

Caster: "It will be my pleasure."

Manaka: "I'll check around the workshop, and then contact Archer's Master. I think Archer will be necessary if we want to properly kill off that Pharaoh."

Caster: "Please be careful. Their loyalty is not absolute. Be careful when you get in touch with the Magus, even if you are Lady Manaka."

Manaka: "It'll be fine, I'll be using the phone."

The girl echoes in the dimly lit underground, filled with death.

While having the masked woman wait beside her.

She exchanged words with the Servant who was in a place far away from them, as if he were right next to them.

Manaka: "That person was amazing. They were walking around carrying a mobile phone."

Caster: "It's rare even for a mage. Many mages don't like advanced scientific technology."

Manaka: "Right? There are those mages too. But there are so many different machines in this workshop—————oh?"

Caster: "Something wrong?"

Manaka: "I've just found an interesting room. Well then, until later."



It was a sight he'd gotten used to.

Even if the location of his bed was moved to the large-scale subterranean workshop, it does not look good.

The layout and the ceiling were all the same as the usual private ward, made for the special ward of a general hospital in the Shinjuku Ward. It was the same with the cables.

He didn't think it was done with any intention.

He was sure they just did the same design. Because it was more efficient that way.

He didn't have a particular grudge against it.

Surely, he was fortunate enough to be moved deep into the underground workshop, and to have a special room prepared for him that had been treated to keep it sterile.

Indeed, he was lucky.

Until that moment, at least, when he was only one to survive.

Manaka: "Mmmm----"

A pretty voice that rings like the sound of a bell.

Manaka: "It's pretty airtight here. Besides the air only circulates in this room. The dustproof and gasproof treatments are carried out properly too."

A voice he did not know.

There was someone different than usual in the usual room.

Manaka: "It's not just mechanically processing. This also has a rune effect. Yeah, otherwise it wouldn't be possible for it to stop Assassin's poison."

Even though he did not know many things, he could recognize it. It was a girl's voice.

Manaka: "I don't hate it. Stuff like this. Your family is a little funny. If I knew they were playing like this, I wonder if it was a pity to kill everyone."

He imagines a large flower in full bloom in a beautifully made garden.

Sure enough, the girl who stared at him as if she was peeking in from above the bed, while avoiding some of the cables, certainly possessed the beauty of a flower. Cute. Pretty. Lovely. A beauty. Multiple descriptions emerged by mobilising all of the knowledge from having lived thus far and gained in a short amount of time.

There was such a girl.

She was wearing clothes he had never seen before even once up till now.

A dress. It looks good on her.

Aro Isemi: ".......Hi there."

He squeezes his voice out from his throat and turns it into words.

His lungs were in very good shape today, and thanks to the lack of a ventilator, he somehow managed to say hello. It was a miracle that he could call out to someone not of his clan and it happened twice in this short period of time.

The first time was the man who had the brilliance of the sun in his eyes.

The second time was this girl.

Manaka: "Hello, cute boy. You don't look too well."

Aro Isemi: ".......Yes, that's right." It's painful. The words are also putting a strain on his throat and lungs.

Manaka: "I'm fine. I'm doing the Holy Grail War right now. For the sake of my beloved."

That explains it.

He could finally grasp the meaning of the girl's mysterious words.

He wondered if that was the reason why no one had come into his hospital room for a while. Normally, people in white coats would come and go, doing various things such as checking the

instruments of the machines connected to him, medicating him through the tubes and needles that are always connected to his blood vessels, interviewing him, fitting him with experimental equipment, preliminary arrangements to transfer magic circuits and so on.

But no one will be coming into this room—————

Manaka: "I'm sorry. I've already killed everyone besides you. Rider is so strong, so I thought I'd cut him off from his mana supply."

She approaches his eyebrows as if she was troubled.

The girl showed a faint amused face.

He couldn't reply.

The words would not come out.

Originally, he wasn't used to the act of talking————because he didn't.
He thought of the many people who would have died outside this room. Lots of people should
have been in this workshop. Adults. Old people too. As they had magic circuits, they were told
about the things that happened during the Holy Grail War, but there were some small children
who didn't know anything.
He had never met most of them.
Their faces too. He didn't even know their names.
But.
The only thing he could choose regarding the girl's message and smile was just to mourn them.
Manaka: "You can blame me. You can hate me. Oh, yeah, you can also be happy, I guess? Because
a good number of the people who forced you to live like this are dead."
Or, was it a kind smile?
The girl says with a face that can be expressed like that.
He didn't remember seeing anyone who actually looks like that. Most of the people in lab coats
didn't have facial expressions, and those who he came into contact with, that sometimes showed
emotions was normally that of pity or sympathy and so on.
Aro Isemi: "I don't blame you. I'm a nobody. Neither younor the Isemi claneither."
Manaka: "Is that so?"
Aro Isemi: "If you could possibly grant"
If she could grant it————
Happiness, peace, and tranquillity for everyone besides himself.
Aro Isemi: "If it's truethat you killed my clanthen that's very"
Sad.
Someone was injured.
That was unbearably sad.
Even so.
Aro Isemi: "Iwouldn't"
He also wouldn't resent anyone for it.

wanted to say. Oddly enough, he had the feeling that this girl could convey all of her unspoken
thoughts and intentions.
That's why
Look, the girl tilts her head a little.
Manaka: "Hm?"
It was a gesture of interest.
At around this point, he gradually understood.
'I wonder, is this child different?'
Different from an ordinary person. Different from your average magus.
Unlike the mages who perceived themselves as having deviated themselves from humanity, and the
people in the lab coats who deliberately suppressed their emotions and treated them like lab rats,
this girl almost certainly had emotions. She takes everything, feels, thinks and does everything.
Was it just, a gauge? An opinion? Her status?
Something is different?
She is different from everyone else.
Manaka: "You're funny. You're just like an olden-day saint."
He had a hallucination as if the room was distorted.
Something was floating on the girl's hand.
It was a black thing.
A mass of something that is black and pulsating more strongly than his own heart which he once
saw through a monitor one day.

He couldn't say the end of the words properly, but he thinks he was able to convey what he

Manaka: "You're way more interesting than your clan. Yep yep," she said, gently patting his head, "So I'm going to see if you really do have a grudges against anyone? What do you think?"

Just by looking at it, something jarred in the depths of himself. His magic circuits. No. His heart,

his soul, something like that was screaming inside of him. That was-----

Aro Isemi: "Going....to.....see....?"

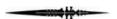
It was something that pulsates wickedly.

Manaka: "I've already found the Greater Grail—————this, no, this child was found in the depths of it. This kid is amazing. It's really hungry too. If you can say the same thing an hour, no, thirty minutes after this child is implanted in you, then I'll leave you alone."

Her beautiful voice made him happy.

Her beautiful face gently conveys her cruelty.

The girl smiled.
Yes, like flowers in full bloom, like stars shining in the night sky.
Manaka: "Do your best, okay?"
For me
I had never seen flowers or stars without using a monitor.





Regarding Subject A.

We had discovered Subject A in an unimaginable state.

A state of near-death. And so on, that one word is not enough
to express it.

Despite being the sole survivor discovered at our clan's main base, the Okutama underground workshop, Subject A was also one of the most severely injured victims.

Although their brain and cardiopulmonary functions were barely left in this state, they were decisively defective in their human body. Due to a natural illness, Subject A had a body with a large defect that could not sustain vital activity without connections to more apparatuses than originally used, but their condition at the time of their discovery far diverged from the one he had in the past.

Likely necrosis or fusion due to some factor. They are being greedily devoured from the inside.

The main cause of it is not clear.

At the time of his discovery, a slight unknown substance was attached to Subject A's body. (Refer to photo 2)

One worker who came into contact with this black gel-like substance immediately went mad and began to act violently, and the other two who tried to subdue him also went mad and attacked the other workers while shouting in fragments words similar to predation, forced measures had to be taken to suppress them, resulting in the complete loss of a total of six workers. (From the contents of the statements, it is inferred that the main cause was an abnormal urge to destroy and the occurrence of hatred similar to a sense of duty. For details about the statements, see Report No. #00233)

Of particular note, in the search of the clan's main base which may have been attacked by some magical means or a biological weapon, the workers had their minds altered, despite all of the workers wearing airtight suits as biochemical equipment.

The identity of the black substance remains unknown to this day.

After that, the substance sticking to Subject A's body mysteriously disappeared.

Subject A is also still alive.

now almost unusable.

They're in a far more intense state than they used to be, and numerical observations say that it's been causing him a lot more pain, every time their heart beats and with each breathe. It is a pain that far exceeds the permissible level for the human body and especially for the brain.

Naturally, high doses of medication and magical cures have been administered——but those that used to work before are

Subject A always feels more pain than their body can bear. Nonetheless, Subject A does not go mad, let alone die, at least because of the pain. So long as the clan's technology is linked to their life support, including their cardiopulmonary functions, it will save their life. Needless to say, they only have a few years left.

It is immeasurable how subject A, who has such a strong spirit, would be useful for the clan's reconstruction if he was a magus with a healthy body, but——

At this stage, the most effective way to utilize Subject A is to continue to take life-sustaining measures, so that they can be selected to be a Master in the next Holy Grail War. Their innate magic circuits and their mentality which surpasses ordinary people must have more than enough potential and aptitude to be recognised by the Holy Grail.

The only problem is the fact that their body has been severely damaged so much, that they cannot withstand the mana consumption and burden associated with summoning a Heroic Spirit and maintaining their materialisation after their summoning, but——

It's not that big of a deal.

The "mask" developed by Elder Shizuri through the accumulation of the clan's skills will function normally as a pseudo-Master face and will continue to maintain the summoned Servant. Even after the death of Subject A.

(An excerpt from a report of a certain general hospital)



——————And then, time marches forward just once.
Eight years later.
1999 AD.
In the corner of a special ward of a certain general hospital in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo.
Around the time when the Second Holy Grail War in history began.
When the battle between seven Masters and Servants was about to unfold.
When the young saint was about to end his life.
Around the time when a terrifying beast was embedded in his body and he was at the end of his
days of further pain.
Under the unchanging ceiling.
Beyond the many cables.
Surrounded by people in expressionless lab coats.
——————————————————————————————————————

I don't have a wish for the Grail.

As this body had already been satisfied.

I've always believed.

In the world's warmth. In the goodness of people.

When I slayed the dreaded Medusa who continued to slaughter many heroes, when I rescued Andromeda who was being offered up as a sacrifice to Cetus the monster of divine punishment, when I took back my mother from the evil influence of the wicked king Polydectes.

Even after reigning as the King of Tiryns.

The Olympian gods have always protected and saved me.

My father, the great god Zeus, the war goddess Athena, and the god of wisdom Hermes, have all aided me in the dangers and predicaments of my many adventures, and many people have praised me, but never hated me.

Monsters who hurt people and kings who have fallen to evil-

I did not doubt those sort of things were removed from the righteous world. I was always blessed. I didn't lose heart even to a life-threatening event.

The world was filled with brilliance and the path to take was always clear.

That's why.....

When I first saw your figure, I was convinced that you were the one I should save, this time, in this world where I had materialised as a Servant and gained a temporay life. You, who I'm bound to. That day, your body was connected to countless cables just like Andromeda did at that time.

You, who were always lying on your white bed.

A frail young boy.

A person who kept on living by being connected to machines while carrying your clan's great ambition, and who had achieved a Heroic Spirit Summoning,

Aro Isemi: "Do they interest you?"

You asked me so.

You told me a story about the constellations, and when you replied that they often have a bond with the people they are connected to. About myself————about the constellation

Perseus who was summoned to the heavens by Athena and became a constellation.

It's an Autumn constellation in this land of the Far East, so you can't see it now.

It's winter now. The cold season.

I wanted to go outside with you and look up at the winter night sky, but I was sad when I was informed that it would be difficult for you. Your body is badly eroded by disease, so you can't leave the white room. How sad that is!

You have never felt the swaying breeze in a field.

You have never even smelled the scent of seawater at the beach.

You have never seen the beauty of the stars in the night sky.

Oh, if that's so-

My wish. My wish to the Holy Grail that will be granted to the last surviving Servant and Master pair, will be to "let's see the autumn starry sky together."

When I told you that, you were very surprised.

Aro Isemi: "Is it so easy to decide on a wish?"

It's not mysterious at all.

There was nothing like a wish in this body before it was summoned. Since I got a constellation, there is nothing I could desire to top it. Then, let's wish for a new friend who was summoned and we later met.

Let's cure your body and see the Perseus constellation together.

When I told you that, you didn't nod. And then, you said.

"Everyone in my clan is connected to my life, which was supposed to have ended eight years ago."

"I also got close to people who said they're my friends."

"So, I desire nothing for myself————"

"Rather, I want to wish for the happiness of a greater deal of people to the Grail."

A life that brings pain every time your heart beats.

Breathing like you're swallowing a needle.

There is no real feeling of life that is not proportionate with the amount of pain you feel. You said that while you were just waiting for death. You will suffer endless pain, but you will not utter a complaint or let out all your grievances. You wished for the happiness of people without worrying about your grisly eroded body at all.

Ah, you are surely a hero. O' great god Zeus, Athena, Hermes, why don't you help him?

There is a person here who deserves to be a constellation more than anyone else. A hero. No, that's wrong, he is a person who wishes for the happiness of people with only a holy item, without relying on violence that hurts or defeats something.

It was true that you had already told me that the gods had already left the earth.

At least there are no gods on this earth.

The compassion of hearing the voice of a saint, is not in this city filled with brightness even at night.

Aro Isemi: "I have a request."

You said, one day.

You were smiling when I replied that I would do whatever I could.

You wanted me to see what the city looks like.

To see, remember and talk to as many people as I could.

It was your modest wish. It's painful to think how much you've doubted and wondered if it was okay to tell me, by the time you uttered those few words. It wasn't so exaggerated, but you were so apologetic about it.

I have no wish. Even if you said that, it's inexcusable to be so flip-floppy.

No, it's no problem.

It really is like that.

When a friend asks a friend for something, you don't have to be feel small or necessarily nervous. As you wished, I spent the entire day walking around, while wandering around the city, I weaved my way through the valleys of skyscrapers that seem to reach the heavens, looked at the chirping birds and the trees in the large park, and remembered the figures of laughing parents and children in high spirits.

I thought it would be better to keep a record with a photo, but you stubbornly shook your head. Its better not to move so much, the cables will slip.

Aro Isemi: "I want you...to see it... with your own eyes. If you can tell it to me as you see and feel it."

I did what you said.

I told you everything I saw that day.

Straight after, you smiled so happily while having a coughing fit.

Aro Isemi: "......My wish. It was the things you saw today."

You said.

You said that, thinking of people you've never even seen yourself.

How beautiful it was.

How heart-breaking.

You love the world and the people so much, but do the people I saw in the city love you?

And now.

Today is the seventh day since I materialised by your summons.

You were fading from what I could see, just by me staying in this world, your were being painfully affected by me sucking up all your mana, your life itself. After a few brief moments, the flames of your life will be snuffed out.

With this, you cannot endure the battle to obtain the Holy Grail-

There was nothing I could do. Nothing.

In this way, I have no choice but to stand at your bedside and stare at you as you weaken.

That might be good too. If they can no longer cure you and you lose yoru life, then I'll disappear with you. It's unclear whether I'll return to being a constellation or return to the Throne of Heroes, but if it is the latter, then it may be possible for my voice to reach the gods.

You will also become a constellation—————

Aro Isemi: "I didn't have any friends."

Your shivering throat.

I could see that little bit of remaining life transforming into sounds, voices and words.

A Servant of the Holy Grail War chooses a Heroic Spirit who has achieved an untimely fate. He was told that was the rule, but he didn't want to. That's right, you continue. You just smile back at those words of restraint, that speaking so much is bad for your body.

Aro Isemi: "That's why you are the only selfishness in my life."

Selfishness?

What are you saying?

Aro Isemi: "I'm glad you were a happy person and not a misfortunate hero."

Don't talk anymore.

I knew. I knew. That body which was being devoured by an impossible illness, was being filled with incredible suffering just by uttering words like this. Please, at the very least, I want you to be at peace if only in your final moments.

But, you kept talking.

You turn to me.

You said that I was your first friend, to me, to Perseus.

I think that what you wish for to the Holy Grail is something warm. So, please ..."

Please. May people be peaceful and happy—————

You smile as if you were dreaming.

You quickly depart from this world, while uttering words that are not words.

While spending the Master Degrees on you left hand, to incarnate me.

I obtain non-creaking bones and supple flesh.

I'm sure, I want the world to be filled with happiness.

Perseus: "So that's it."

I obtain new bones over my body.

I obtain new flesh over my whole body. While recognizing the amazing fact that a real heart was connected to my Spirit Origin, while surely feeling that I had obtained a body that was not made of temporary ether, and with hot red blood racing through me, I stare at you dead face now. Even though you employed a Master Degree-To incarnate me. Where in this little body did he have so much power left? I don't know if you achieved it with some secret magecraft technique or if your individual qualities applied your Master Degree in this way. However, I see you dead while accepting your wishes. Perseus: "You would go that far...for everyone......" At that moment. There was something swirling in my heart. I think about your unrewarded life. You didn't resent others until the end and you bowed your head to your heart which believed in the world's warmth. And then. I remember my disgusting rage at everything that didn't save you. —My love, respect and anger muddily melt away. Losing all its colours, it completely muddies into a black which light doesn't reach. Perseus: "I pray to the Holy Grail now." For happiness for you. If you say that the Holy Grail is truly omnipotent, if you say it can do something that not even my distant father Zeus can do. Then I shall swear here and now. Holy one.

A person who wished for the happiness of people.

You----

Only you must be happier than anyone else.

I won't let them take you away from this world, that didn't extend its kind hands to you. That's for sure.





Beautiful Mind Arc

Act-6
The Princess of the Root next lays her hands on
—————Loveliness had taken shape.
Pure and innocent. Some may liken her to a flower or fairy. If there is a poet who knew the world before the illusion hides itself, they must have expressed it while speaking of the various mysteries that live and expending all of their techniques, while incorporating their many emotions. More beautiful than the flowers blossoming in the earthly gardens and not so voluptuous to make people crazy, she was a precious beauty that gently fills people.
In the bathroom which looked a bit modest compared to the size and scale of the mansion, soaking herself in the bathtub, the girl was clearly shining. She was filled with emotions. If they saw her pink cheeks, anyone could understand. There is "love" here.
It was not because of the heat of the hot water which was lathered in white with soap, that her body temperature had risen. The girl knew it. Her sweetheart is right near her.
Manaka: "Hey, Saber. Can you hear me?"
Beyond the door inlaid with frosted glass———————————————————————————————————
Purely, the girl thinks of him. Innocently, the girl longs for him.
As an observation result, it was an unmistakable truth and fact. The girl lives for him. Knowing his heartfelt wish, she decided to devote "everything" to fulfill it. Shakespeare would say. "This is undoubtedly love."



At the end of miracles and the secrets of magecraft, in Tokyo in 1991, a group of the most supernatural and powerful Heroic Spirits will materialise and altogether become a hindrance that stands in her way. Whether it's a mad beast that howls at the moonlit night, a magus who controls the five elements, a girl who is a deadly poisonous mass, a great hero of the Far East, a woman who manipulates a super heavy deformed lance, or a God-King who owns the heavens and earth.

She is not frightened.

She is not afraid.

The girl will not show any hesitation, even if almost everything in the world tries to stop her. That is her love and the world will almost never bare its fangs at her.

Iust_____

Sometimes, she regrets the stupidity of her own actions.

An example is possible. Even now, at this moment too.

Manaka: ".....Saber."

The girl slightly repeats the name she called out. Two days ago. The decisive battle in Tokyo Bay left a terrible wound on his body, even though she had made multiple plans, made every effort and did their best on top of their best. Although all of his wounds had already healed with her full-body treatments—————initially she was somewhat panicked by the depth of his many wounds. She showed an expression that she wouldn't normally show.

Manaka: "You're there, right? My prince, no, my knight."

Manaka: "No, you must stay there. Because we don't know when a scary Servant will come to attack us."

Manaka: "Or....."

Chuckling, the girl smiles this time. The girl's pouting had already stopped, and it was a malicious smile that said "I rather tease and annoy my honest, innocent beloved knight to my heart's content." Should it been as age-appropriate mischief or innocence that is somewhat younger than her age? Either way.

Manaka: "If you're going to be so mean, I too already have an idea. Umm let's see, not in that place, preferably......"

What is that bewitching sounding voice?

Manaka: "I'll enter"

They were words that sounded like Morgan.

Manaka: "...the bath with you too-----

It's an act of pitiful self-harm. Behold, the proof.

Manaka: ".....Hii!"

It should be more accurate to say that rather than being surprised, she was more surprised by saying it herself. After she seemed to notice her blunder, the girl's cheeks quickly turned into a bright rosy colour. It was no longer just a pink colour.

In a blink of an eye, her ears were dyed red.

Manaka: "I-I-It's N-n-nothing. N-Nothing at all."

What do you do if she feels embarrassed to say it herself, without calling it self-harm or entrapping herself? The girl who sinks into the bath while muttering, "Stupid, stupid," right now, is no different from those pure and innocent girls who fall in love that overflow the world. Blub Blub Blub.

Blub Blub.

Blub.

She sinks down to her face.



About dematerialisation.

One of the features that materialised Servants automatically have is the ability to turn into an incorporeal spirit form. To be precise, it should not be called a function, but it should be recognised as an ancillary thing as a result.

First, they who have been summoned are an entity comprised of aether, and as such, possess a temporary body. They are entities in this world.

Even if they are tentative, they are no different from us in that they are physically composed, and if they hit a physical barrier, they will have no choice but to destroy it.

At the same time, they are also unworldly spiritual beings. Unless they achieve "incarnation" due to special circumstances, they are still beings in this world and at the same time, beings not of this world.

Therefore——

They can obtain the functional trait of dematerialisation.

As spiritual bodies, they turn into incorporeal beings, and can move through physical barriers such as walls, without receiving physical interference.

Also, it is probably because they are unworldly beings. The amount of mana consumed to maintain their materialisation, which has been transformed into a spiritual body by unravelling their temporary body, is significantly reduced. Even if they are a powerful Heroic Spirit with high mana consumption, if they are in a dematerialised state, then the burden on the Master will be mostly reduced.

However

In their dematerialised state, Servants are unable to exert a physical influence on others. Therefore, it is assumed that the general use of a servant is "to be dematerialised during normal hours and materialised in battle———"

This greatly depends on the characteristics of the Servant. Some will only have meaning, when they are always materialized.

(An excerpt from an old notebook)



A certain day in February, 1991. Evening. Sajou Residence in Suginami Ward, Tokyo.

Who knew that there were now three Servants in this small mansion.

Who would've guessed. Cardinals and other members of the Holy Church, the Knights Templar, Lords of the Mages Association beyond the ocean and unknown members of the Far East Mages Association. No-one could have predicted, that a single magus girl had signed a contract with a Heroic Spirit and even made a further two Servants submit themselves personally to

???: "......"

The girl exhales her slightly white breath.

She knows that she is breathing thinly in her temporary lungs.

Standing quietly, the girl——————Assassin takes in the chilly night air with her tanned body.

There was no deep meaning for breaking her dematerialisation and standing here in her true form. Saber, who was loved more than anyone by her master, wasn't going to compete with her over the unnatural continuation of their materialisation. No, he wouldn't. But it may be her master's wish if they did.

Perhaps, if she had to say it, she wanted to see it with her own eyes, that which laid beyond her gaze. A splendid garden covered with glass walls and ceilings————— which was called "Garden" by her master.

The knowledge that came from the Holy Grail did not give details of the landscaping, but she could easily tell at a glance that it was a magnificent garden.

Only at night, did it look like a beauty that shines under the stars.

The girl had never seen it in the morning herself.

So, she didn't know whether it was true in the morning.

She just stared at it.

Standing at the end of the passageway leading from the main residence, she was in front of the door, without opening the door to Garden.

She kept motionlessly staring though the glass, without entering.

Assassin: "A bounded field, huh?"

She does not enter.

She cannot enter.

The door had been laid with protection magecraft.

Is it a kind of bounded field, that grows stronger when a predetermined protection target enters inside? It is interesting that it is strengthened by a kind of curse. It will work to some extent against Servants. In particular, the girl naturally thinks that if she does not have any kind of magical resistance skills, she should not step further.

If there was a Servant who enters here, it will only be those with a decent purpose——————

Like a Servant who tries to kill a hostile Master during the Holy Grail War.

???: "Who's there?"

A soft voice.

It sounded unsuspecting, but it was filled with caution somewhere.

It's not the enemy. An unmistakable human being. Very young and terribly fragile.

Emitted from a child's throat, it didn't resemble the sound of her master.

It's not like she didn't notice the other person's approach. However, even if she sensed it, she had just decided to gaze at this garden. She determined that she, who was her master's blood relative, wasn't a target of vital caution. That's all.

After exhaling another white breath —

Assassin turns around while shaping her "face" with her Transformation skill.

She was glad that her clothes had already changed into her usual one-piece attire. It was an act of consideration as her appearance as a Servant was not suitable if she materialised in the mansion, but should she pay attention to her appearance in the future?

Assassin: "Excuse my intrusion."

Ayaka: "Umm, are you.....one of my father's guests?

Assassin: "Yes, I am."

She smoothly lies.

She was used to lying.



It was the same in her previous life, and even now after her death and materialisation, it hasn't changed. If she had not officially recontracted with her master, she would've gone to the red-light district every night to prey on the lives of men, to replenish her mana and maintain her body. Souls. Mana. She kept devouring it.

She always uses lies.

She smiles with the face of a liar, seduces them with lying words, and drives men wild with lying gestures.

She's sure that she will do that again tonight. At the street corner around Shinjuku, Nakano or Ogikubo.

Ayaka: "U-umm."

Perhaps she couldn't stand the silence, the child opened her lips again.

Ayaka: "Are you, maybe, one of my big sister's friends?

Assassin: "Yes, I am."

Again, she lied.

She soon realized that the contents of her words were inconsistent with her previous response. Therefore.

Assassin: "I'm an acquaintance of Mr. Hiroki Sajou, and a friend of Miss Manaka," she smoothly makes up for it.

Ayaka: "That so?" Assassin: "Yes." Ayaka: "I see....."

Perhaps it was because she had given the family name, or because her tone was a little sloppy. Did she suspect her?

Even so, there is no problem. She is used to infiltration. During her lifetime, she travelled to the bases of influential people who were against her religious order and generals and western knights who desecrated her lands and suddenly encountered young children. Just like a strong knight or a gate guardian, she can go with it no problem.

Above all, she didn't hate children.

If it's a question of whether she liked or hated them, then yes, she liked them.

Young people are especially dear to her, because she had neither conceived or gave birth.

Innocence that should be brought up with love. Partners who she had never had the chance to embrace with both arms.

Assassin:	"You're Miss Aya	aka, right? N	Iiss Ayaka Sajou.'
Ayaka: "Y	eah, I am."		
Assassin:	"I'm———		

What should she say? Her name.

The name of Hassan-i-Sabbahwasn't unique to her.

There are too many omissions for her to be the only Hassan in the world. Although she was weak and thirsty for contact with others, and although she had personally handled many jobs, she couldn't believe that she was able to fulfill her mission more than enough as the leader of the order, because of that the only thing she can be proud of as one of the Hassan was that she died at the hands of that comrade.

For example, even if some miracle happens in the Holy Grail War and she obtains the Holy Grail with these hands————

She thinks it presumptuous.

What do you mean by introducing yourself as Hassan?

Assassin: "Call me Zill."

Ayaka: "Zill"

Assassin: "In my native tongue, it means "shadow.""

Shadow. That suits her to a degree.

Without realizing it, a self-deprecating smile was about to appear on her mouth. She consciously suppresses it.

This smile should not be shown to a young child.

Ayaka: "Zill, do you like Garden?"

Assassin: "......Yes. It's very beautiful, so I just turned my eyes towards it."

Ayaka: "That so?"

In that moment. Assassin desperately endured the urge to attack.

It was a lovely sight to behold. If she was the shadow of the night and Manaka Sajou, her Master, was the moonlight, then the expression the young child floated was the warm sunshine itself.

Was it an exaggerated description?

No. Absolutely, not.

Although their natures are completely different, certainly, they can reach Assassin there in heaven.

As far as one thing that cannot be reached, even if the amount of light that is far from her master's, it is definitely light.

And. Unlike her Master, she was someone who must not be touched.

She can touch her Master.

But she cannot touch this child.

It's a slight, absolute difference.

"Here is my study spot," says the child. While being faintly shy.

Assassin: "I see."

Ayaka: "Though I can't really say what I'm studying....."

Assassin: "That's fine."

Perhaps it's a study spot for black magic, which is the magecraft of her family.

If an onlooker saw it, they'd immediately see that there is equipment for that at the edge of the garden.

Ayaka: "The truth is I thought it was my big sister's spot, but now I'm using it."

Assassin: "That's I wonder if that's true."

Ayaka: "Hm?"

Assassin: "No. I've said too much. Please forget it."

Her master does not need that equipment.

Ayaka: "Umm......If you want to see it, would you like me to show you around Garden?"

Softly.

Her hand reaches out to her.

Ah. What purity, what good will!

'Crap. If you touch me, you will soon fall into anguish and die.'

Therefore. Assassin avoids the child's outstretched hand. By chance, she made a mistake in her eye measurements, and naturally made her think that she could not reach her. Her white fingers could not reach her brown fingers.

Ayaka: "Eh?"

Assassin: "Please refrain yourself. Miss Ayaka."

They passed each other by. Their hands do not overlap.

Assassin: "You must not reach out to a vulgar person like me."

Yes, the Hassan of the Serenity does not notice until her final moments.

To the fact that one possibility has ceased here.

She does not notice.

That is why, she does not open this glass door.

She just..... stands right in front of it.

She does not respond—————to her extended hand.



???: "I see-----'

In a room in the Sajou house which was originally one of their guest rooms.

Quietly, the man was speaking.

He was greatly convinced.

About the Servant without a Master who is not himself.

She is not the knight who has a Holy Sword, but never uses it for its intended purpose. That knight has an undoubtable Master, so he is taking about another Servant here.

Like Caster, she was a servant of his mistress, Manaka Sajou who they have no contract with. Her class is Assassin. True name, Hassan of the Serenity. Or was it **Hassan-i Sabbah**?

She was a pitiful woman.

He does not know the details of her past, but he thinks it was a miserable life overall.

But, her current way of life was seen as little twisted for Caster. In that case, it's even doubtful that she understands what her own heartful wishes are.

She was already making her way here.

Even though he had a deep understanding of her.

Caster: "Is that what you're seeking? Assassin"

The words dissolve into the silent room.

Caster: "...... You are definitely not a vulgar person. You are a noble one."

His words were a sentence.

About some kind of accusation or some kind of condemnation.

Caster: "Although, if that's so. Now you should know what your deeds have accomplished."

He directs his gaze to a corner of the room.

At a culture tank for Homunculi. There is **something** floating in the chemicals. He had decided that there was no use for it, but what if there was an unexpected use for ir.



About a Servant's hobbies and tastes.

As mentioned before, it is clear that those who have been summoned and materialised have a distinct personality, i.e. a unique personality and tastes. No further description is needed about the point that a smooth relationship should be established.

More specifically here.

Where I describe when hobbies and tastes are important.

If they materialise only in battle and dematerialise in normal times as much as possible, then the number of human contacts with the Servant will be repressed without end. In such cases, it can be expected that there is no room for them to be involved in hobbies and tastes.

But for some reason----

If the number of contacts is large due to the Servant's or Master's will, or if it is difficult to dematerialise because of their extremely special circumstances, then the chances of

them coming into contact with their hobbies and tastes will naturally increase on its own accord.

One example I know of is food.

One Servant clearly had a particular preference for food. Do they desire it because they cannot dematerialise and continue to exist as an entity?

Or does the act of eating work to aid their mana replenishment?

Certainly, it is true that mana is linked to vitality and that nutritional supplements and rest work effectively for the vital functions of our bodies.

But it is unclear whether it can be clearly defined as a "supplement to a Servant's mana supply."

However, even if its meaning as a supplement is weak by any chance.

If you have a clear understanding of their hobbies and tastes, then it is a bad idea to ignore them.

If it is the kind of thing that can be handled with your own abilities and skills, then satisfying them will never have a negative effect on the Holy Grail War.

Of course, if it doesn't violate the magus' rule of the concealment of mysteries.

Then it's not a matter of blindly satisfying them.

(An excerpt from an old notebook)



He heard a pretty sound.

He could immediately recognise that it was the humming performed by the girl. It is a fairy's singing voice.

He, Saber dreams of those distant days, where he heard it in the deep forests of his homeland, Britain.

In the past, he actually witnessed many things that modern mages speak of as Phantasmal Species, heard the voices and the sounds they sometimes emitted, sometimes touched and exchange words with them and if it was a ind of giant or demon that bared their fangs on his people, he would sometimes point his blade at them and defeat them.

Now, what reaches him as he is seated at the evening dinner table like this, is nothing but a beautiful melody similar to the chorus of the fairies he heard back then.

A girl who is his Master in the world's first Holy Grail War.

Manaka Sajou.

Her humming was truly lovely. Beautiful.

As he can recall from that figure.

That great magus, Merlin, would almost certainly have compared her to a flower. Even himself, who ran through Britain with only the horrors of war that knew little of poetry, thinks of flowers.

She is the same as when he first saw her----

A large flower wet with morning dew that blooms gorgeously.

Manaka: "I'm so sorry. I'm sure you're probably very hungry, but I kept you waiting."

The girl who finished her bath was making a full blown dinner.

It was wonderful, as if she was cooking the world itself and arranging it on the table. The main dish was roast chicken from the UK, roasted with plenty of herbs, and roast beef with a exquisite condition between the roasted outside and the half-raw inside. There were two types of Austrian Goulash in the soup which boasted of a richness because of the lots of paprika poweder in it. The salads and various hors d'oeuvres are French-style, as if they were handmade by a specially delicate arrist.

For the time being, this was all of it.

"But, that's normal," she says.

Manaka: "But, you're more than human, you're a Servant. And above all else, I already know you eat well......rather, its game time from here on out."

While smiling like a flower.

While sporting radiance like a star.

Manaka: "Come on, Saber. Make sure to eat lots√"

Saber: "Incredible, this is————"
In front of a mountain of food, he is stunned. She introduced him to them one by one, but he couldn't figure it out halfway-through. Um,what are those black round eggs? They look like chicken eggs, but he had never seen black egg whites like that. Are they from an animal he does not know about or are they from a demon beast or a phantasmal beast?
Saber: 'Truly. You can do anything, can't you? Manaka'
Not even a professional cook could not match her. The girl's cooking skills were more than perfect and had improved from before.
Manaka: "Please, don't hesitate. Just eat as much as you like, okay? After thatif you can, please tell me which one of these was the most delicious." Saber: "Ah."
He nods with approval. Thinking a bit, he opens his mouth.
Saber: "I wonder if its okay to eat these by myself." Manaka: "Of course. I'm sure you can eat the whole world."
'I don't know about that.' Returning to it, Saber gently shoves the words to the back of his throat. The girl's face. Because he thought that her true smile she floated there should not be clouded.
The girl————————————————————————————————————
Manaka: "There are seconds if you likeBut, honestly, don't overdo it."
She was so pretty. Beautiful. Cheerful and kind, just a girl herself.

Without a speck of cloudiness or deception.

Saber strongly realizes that it is not a masked smile.

While having skills that seem almost omnipotent, while having an amazing innate mystery that even a magus from the Age of the Gods cannot even reach, while sometimes exhibiting a cruelty that resembles the one Fairy Princess, Morgan hid——————she laughs like this. She smiles. Bashfully.



Now, eat the food that the girl is treating him to. Is there something evil in the flavour there? No. By any means. There is certainly a feeling of compassion and sympathy for him in there, as he was wounded in battle.
That's exactly why———————————————————————————————————
He can't help but bet on that ray of hope. Saber suddenly tries to open his lips. He was recalling his memories of the other day. Is it the words of Archer who crumbled himself with his supernatural technique?
Archer: "Hey, King of Knights. The man who wields a sword of radiance with glory." Archer: "—————What will you wish for on the Holy Grail?"
A further memory revives. Is it the words of the rider who wielded god's authority with unwavering conviction?
Rider: "I know that light." Rider: "I witnessed it once. On that day when my friend and brother parted from my side for the first time." Rider: "Then, you are————"
Both were strong men to be admired. Both were praiseworthy warriors. They were dazzling heroes in the Holy Grail War, where they bet their lives for their wishes.
Then, what about himself? Asking himself, he thinks of the words of her father about the girl before his eyes.
The state of the s
Hiroki Sajou: "That is————————————————————————————————————

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That was a few days ago.

Before he headed towards the decisive battle on Tokyo Bay. Hiroki Sajou, the head of the Sajou family, told Saber who was called to his room.

Hiroki Sajou: "Before that, she was more than a human being."

The family head's private room. There was no-one else in there.

At present, Assassin and Caster had newly appeared at this mansion.

Not even Manaka who is a participant in the Holy Grail War was there. As she was cooking.

Hiroki Sajou: "......Anyway, Manaka has clearly changed in her mental state since your summoning.

She's begun to behave like a innocent girl, as she is around that age."

Hiroki Sajou was calm.

He simply spoke matter of factly, without breaking the mood or telling him only the facts.

"Then," Saber asked.

"What kind of girl was she before he was summoned?"

Hiroki Sajou: "A girl? Oh, that's right. She looked like that on the outside, but since she was a baby, she was a child who could see through everything. Sometimes, she even seemed to see through her own fate."

Her fate
They were cruel words.
For the child named Ayaka Sajou.
For the girl named Manaka Sajou.
Yes, for both sisters, they were—

Hiroki Sajou: "And, now. After your summoning, Manaka has gotten a variety of expressions. But......"

He sums up his speech.

It was like a soliloquy, not a conversation.

Hiroki Sajou: "......It's futile. I can't say I'm delighted by it."



Saber: "Manaka."

It was in the middle of their meal.

It might not have been a topic for during a meal.

If a girl smiles as a girl, then he had the awareness and intuition to say that it is best to leave things be, and because she is smiling like this, his judgement should say, that the moment to strike is only when he has her compassion.

As a result, the latter won.

Saber, made up his mind and opened his lips.

Already, it was the nth time of same act, but

Saber: "......It's not an exaggeration to say that the general outcome of the Holy Grail War had already been decided. Yes?"

Manaka: "Hm?"

Manaka Sajou looks back at him with a smile on her face.

Manaka: "Yes, Saber. Its virtually decided that we'll win."

Cheerfuly, she places a second helping of the soup onto his plate before he speaks.

Her expressions were still like a good fairy.

Her words remain cheerful and innocent.

Manaka: "----Soon, the six Servants and Masters. All of them will be dead."

Everything.....

.....Was the same.

She was no different from when she was pleased with Saber's words about his impressions of the flavor of food.

She was no different from when she had laughed that she was most happy to hear that it was delicious.

And, for the first time, when Saber told her it was not good to kill a person, why did she tilt her small neck so adorably? Everything about her remained the same.

Manaka: "Berserker was easier than I expected. I was worried when you said that you absolutely had to fight him and fought him, but you couldn't lose in the first place, yeah, and when it was over, it was surprisingly easy to kill him together with his Master."

Manaka: "Goulash was easier than I expected. I was worried because it must be a dish you're
unfamiliar with, but in the first place, you love delicate seasoning and yeah, when you try it, it has
a surprisingly light and delicate flavour."

I see.

Is this so?

Manaka: "Rider was a powerful foe, but I think we managed it. See, didn't Archer do his best? As expected of my king, they must have dropped out from the Holy Grail War."

Manaka: "Pelmeni was a powerful foe, , but I think we managed it. See, it's like Gyoza, right? It's not exactly the same, but the point is to serve the food wrapped."

The differences—

Manaka: "Caster and Assassin are alright, they're good children, so they won't go against me."

Manaka: "The Roast Chicken is probably alright, I've made it before, so I know the tricks to it...."

There are none. By this point———————Saber was finally beginning to understand. His words won't reach her?

No. No!

He is reaching her. Without a doubt, the girl was noticing his words.

On top of that, she was replying. Meaning.

There are absolutely no differences between the trends in the Holy Grail War and the topic of cooking.

He hasn't detected any differences between the fact of killing people and the topic of cooking.

Manaka: ".....Um. I'm sorry, I apologise if I 've rubbed you the wrong way. I know you're an egoist who is kind and wants to save humans no matter what, but....."

Her gaze was shaking.

There was even a hint of wetness in her eyes.

The girl's expression had gloomily darkened.

Manaka: "I know....you'll hate me. But, I'll just say it.I'm sorry, Saber. I'll be more careful. So that you won't grow to hate......"

Sincerely.

Honestly.

With straight clear eyes, the girl said:
Manaka: "I'll make sure you won't say it."
Saber: "Manaka."
Manaka: "It's fine. I'm fine. If its for your sake, I'll do anything. I know you don't want to kil anyone. Which is why———————"
After cutting off her words, for a moment. She kindly and gently smiles. She gazes at him more dearly than anyone else. The innocent and beautiful girl tells the sky silver knight.
Manaka: "I'll satisfy your ego ⁷ ."
Manaka: "The gentle you. The cruel you. So that you will never come to hate yourself."
Manaka: "Instead, I will kill everyone for you."
——————And above all else, her clear and pretty eyes.
$\textbf{Manaka:} \ \text{``Is that alright with you? Hey, Saber? I'll do my best and make sure to save your Britain.''}$
——————————————————————————————————————
Saber closes his lips after opening them once. Nothing. He couldn't say anything. All of the words he had prepared to scold her were vanishing like mist. The king of knights of a ruined country was compelled to accept all her words.

⁷ Ego: Wish

Truly, it was exactly as the girl said. For the sake of his one heartfelt wish.

After all, like all of the Heroic Spirits who materialised in this land of the Far East by the power of the Holy Grail, he had an absolute wish. Because he had already decided to save his distant homeland, even if he had to dye his hands that feigned innocence and nobility black and blood red.

And-----

Because he was the sky silver knight.

Because he hadn't yet met the bud of hope who informed him of his mistakes.

He just cannot resist the girl's shining feelings.



Special Act: Stray Sheep

My older brother has disappeared.

Tatsumi Kitano hasn't been to school for three days. There is no notice of absence. And even if I try to ring him or go to his apartment and ring his doorbell, there is no response. There was also such a message from the homeroom teacher of the high school in Tokyo where my brother attends.

For example, his homeroom teacher knew my brother wasn't the type to wander around Shibuya all night with some bad friends, and we knew it too. Still, we didn't think it was a big deal at first. Did he pick up how to play like that by chance or did he make a friend like that? My father started one of those "When I was young, I did that too," stories, though I'm sure he was trying to reassure my mother.

My dad had an overnight business trip overseas and my mum's health had taken a turn for the worst, so I decided to go to Tokyo. So I take the key to my brother's apartment.

Rather I offered to do so by myself.

I had just finished my final regular exam for my middle school life and had also finished the high school recommendation entrance exam.

Tamaki: "I'll go. Papa has important work, and Mama; you have to get some proper sleep."
Mrs Kitano: "But Tama ⁸ "
Tamaki: "I said I'll be fine. One day isn't going to affect my record now."
Mrs Kitano: "That's not the point. Listen, Tama, a girl shouldn't be going by
herself———"
Tamaki: "I'll be a high school student soon."

Although her mother had been opposed to it for a while saying, "It's dangerous for a middle school student to go out by herself," she had been over to her brother's apartment many times during summer and winter vacation. Rather, she wondered if now was the time to go alone. "Maybe, Tatsumi couldn't respond to your calls from the outside because he was down with a fever," my mother worriedly said. My father didn't feel so worried, he said, "When I was young, I would enjoy the nightlife too" or whatever.

I wonder how I felt.

If I opened the door, would my brother be lying down, unable to move with a high fever? Or, would he be a big brother who became a delinquent or like a different person than when I met him during winter vacation?

No. Both are wrong.		

⁸ Tama: short for Tamaki

But for some reason.

Tatsumi: "What's the matter, Tamaki? Is something wrong?"

I might have imagined my brother laughing at me, saying it like that.

Tamaki Kitano.

My name printed on my middle school student notebook.

Right next to it is an ID photo of me in my school uniform. I look relatively cute. Some people say that I'm like my brother, but I think I'm more like my mother if anything.

My brother told me, "Gee, your photo looks good," maybe at the end of March, last year, around spring break. He had a similar reaction when he showed me his newly-made student handbook when he became a third-year student. My brother looked strangely happy.

What kind of reaction should I have responded with?

Something like lightly whacking my brother's shoulders and saying, "Don't stare at me like that, you creeper."

Tamaki: "......Oh, there it is. Hikari No. 4."

At times like this, I'm glad I live in Hiroshima city near JR station.

I usually don't find it so convenient, but I haven't found it inconvenient. Compared to Setagaya, Tokyo, where I spent a little over twelve years there since I was born, Hiroshima didn't feel uncomfortable enough to make a particular fuss about it, even if there are some differences between them.

Rather, it may be more convenient than when I lived in Setagaya, if I wasn't bad at getting to the Hatchobori shopping district within a few minutes by taking the

Hiroden————tram. It's different from big cities like Ikebukuro and Shinjuku, but it suffices enough to go to a big bookshop, look at clothes and play with my friends.

Still, if I'm forced to mention something, would the fact that there are Okonomiyaki chain stores here and there, like hamburger chain stores be enough? Unlike the ones in Tokyo, this

okonomiyaki is not grilled by the shop assistant, but by yourself. As expected, I was a little surprised. After being surprised, ah, I thought my brother would turn blue by it.

However, my brother is not that dexterous.

He is especially not good at flipping something over, and because of that, he often grumbles that he can't make grilled fish well even though he lives by himself. In that respect, I am good at both grilled fish and Okonomiyaki. It is a regular event for me to serve grilled fish which I do not usually eat to my brother every time a long vacation comes.

Tamaki: "I guess I'll go after doing some shopping."

I buy a reserved seat ticket. While having the station attendant punch it, I board the bullet train that has entered the platform, and head to the non-smoking tenth car. I find a seat and sit down.

Tamaki: ".....Should I make grilled fish, after all?"

I muttered with a sigh.

At any rate, he probably hasn't eaten any decent food.

If I want to make him something, I have to buy the ingredients first.

Most of the time, my brother's fridge is almost empty, and I can tell with a glance that he may not be able to cook for himself well. If I showed the state of it to my mother, she'd probably roll her eyes and grieve. In fact, that is one of the reasons I offered to go to Tokyo this time.

Tamaki; "I'm worried."

I look out the window.

The bullet train on weekdays wasn't so crowded, so I could easily get a window seat. The city of Hiroshima can be seen behind the thick glass. It has a sky leading to the sea.

The sky was grey.

It was a colour I didn't like very much.



I arrived at JR Tokyo Station at 13:12 pm. It was a sky the same colour as Hiroshima. A terribly sunken grey. I transfer from the JR line to the private train line heading to Setagaya where my brother lives. At first glance, nothing appears to have changed in the city where my entire family lived until two years ago, probably because I come every season to play.

The truth is it has.

Everything here and there is changing.

The vending machines on the street corners that have been put there since I was little have been completely removed.

A five-story condominium was built in the vacant lot where I often played with my brother. I can hardly tell the differences of the state of the area around Shinjuku station where I got off to transfer to the private line, but if its in Setagaya, if I can carefully observe it, I can see that things have changed.

A city I knew. Our city until a little while ago.

Is this faintly stagnant stench a photochemical smog? In the middle of winter?

Ahh. A city I know. A city where my big brother is.

One day, my brother said. "You always have an unpleasant face, this is because of the ozone odour that accompanies the generation of smog, so maybe if we move, you'll have less of the chance to smell it," or something like that.

Tamaki: "......Hnn."

I place my hand on my chest.

I-I see. I was so worried that I became relieved.

Once I become aware of it, I can clearly tell that the tension in my whole body is being released. It's okay, it's okay. The city where my brother lives, our city until a little while ago is the same as usual. In that case, even my brother should be the same as usual too.

The alleys that feel awfully narrower than in Hiroshima, and the husky dogs that bark loudly at me as I walk along the eaves are the same. Same as when I came during winter break a little over a month ago.

Shall I go after some shopping _____ for ingredients?

What are the seasonal fish for this season?

No. Let's talk to my brother first. I want to see his face.

When I got off the platform at Tokyo station, I thought 'I shouldn't make mum worry,' and changed course. I'm worried too. So, first, I won't be satisfied unless he says one "I'm sorry." Afterwards, I'll ask him if there is something he wants to eat or if he wants me to make him something.

And then, I-I arrived at my brother's apartment before 15:00 as planned. First, I check the mailbox. It doesn't look like his letters have piled up. I climb the stairs to the second floor, and ring the buzzer of my brother's room. I wait two seconds and tried again. No response. After using the buzzer for a third time, I use my duplicate key and open the door. A small 1DK9 room. From the entrance, I can see the kitchen and the bathroom first. Beyond them, is a six-tatami mat room. Tamaki: "Tatsumi." There was no reply. He wasn't collapsed at the entrance. Nor in the cramped bathroom, toilet or even in the six-tatami mat room. My brother isn't here. I open the closet just in case, but no one was there. When I was living near this apartment with my entire family, or rather, when I was very young, my brother and I would often hide in the closet and play together. He's not here. Tatsumi. Tamaki: "......Huh?" Even if I tilt my head. My brother is nowhere to be seen. –Suddenly, as I look.... There were two teacups on a small table.

⁹ DK room: A one room apartment with a dining and kitchen area.



It's thoughtless and reckless.
What we're trying to do is outrageously ridiculous.
My friend said that, and I don't doubt his words anymore.
Ah, it's too much.
No matter how I think about it, I'm probably at a

disadvantage.

So, I'll write it here.

Actually, I should leave this letter in the room, but I can't. I've heard how it works, but I'm not sure. Anyway, should I hide it? Since he said in our chat that they're thorough with such things.

If you leave something in your room, it's likely to be the first to be disposed of.

So I'll leave it.....

.....In here

Father.

Mother.

Tamaki.

Please stay safe.

(An excerpt from the memo section of a student handbook)



My thoughts were normal.

My senses were calm.

Accepting everything as it is, my heart is as clear as the silent surface of water.

There is no fluctuation for even one minute.

There is no hesitation, whatsoever.

I will die at any time.

I'll offer all of my soul to the Holy Grail.

I don't want to die.

Nο

No

I am----

The Hassan of the Serenity.

I, Hassan-i-Sabbah, who has materialised in the present day as Assassin.

Am always prepared to die.

It's not like I've given up. It's the reverse.

I have finally obtained it.

I was able to fulfill my heartfelt wish without relying on the power of the Holy Grail.

That is, I've obtained a master.

In other words, I have obtained the ultimate light that will not perish even if I touch it.

Is there anything else I want to wish for?

Nothing, nothing at all.

I'm satisfied, more so than when I dashed through the night in my past life. Than when I danced on that night.

I am so satisfied that I'm about to burst, more so than the moment when I placed myself into the hands of that awe-inspiring figure and died as one of the unmistakable Hassan-i-Sabbahs.

—————I'm sure, I'm already overflowing.

I'd die for that person.

If this filthy soul can truly activate the Holy Grail as one of the "virutous souls" called by the Mages, I will offer it. Even now. And always.

Oh. When will that time arrive?

My exalted lady, my irreplacable master—————Miss Manaka Sajou.

Already, my master has pinned down the location of the Greater Grail.

There is virtually only one Master left.

The end of the Holy Grail War is near.

Perhaps, my master isn't very concerned about the progress of the Holy Grail War where mages wage their lives to contend for it. As a matter of fact, my master is no longer aware of the activation of the Greater Grail.

We won't be staying in the Sajou mansion for that much longer.

Very soon, our base will be moved to the Greater Grail-

Caster: "You're just in the nick of time."



It was about evening.

Caster was the one who meagrely broke the silence of the hallway and called out to me.

A Heroic Spirit who offers his allegiance to my master. Unlike Saber who was bound to her as her official Servant through the Master Degree, his way of being was perhaps closer to mine. A person who similarly killed his own Master and chose to ally himself with my master, Manaka.

The Heroic Spirit of Betrayal.

However, the fundamental difference between him and me—————is that he is not an anti-hero.

True Name: Paracelsus

An ancient magus from an era where magecraft and science were not as separated as they are today.

A man who loved people and contributed to the development of health care. Not a person who proceeded down a bloody path, but one of the Heroic Spirits who was dazzlingly righteous and left his name in human history.

Caster: "I've been looking for you. Assassin."

Beyond his bewitching black hair, he smiles at me.

It was a disgusting look.

I know.

This is nothing but the face of a beast or a madman who licks his lips in front of his prey.

It was one of the guest rooms I passed.

Hiroki Sajou, the head of the Sajou family—————and my master's father, allows us Servants to move freely around his mansion. The only rule is that we avoid contact with Miss Ayaka Sajou, my master's younger sister as much as possible. Even if we do meet her, we are not to tell her that we are Servants and do our utmost to try not to get her involved in the Holy Grail War.

It was something I was told after the sudden encounter between me and Miss Ayaka, the other day.

Therefore, I spend my time paying careful attention.

I have more time to refrain from dematerialising. When I materialise like this, I am also mindful to take on the appearance of a maskless human girl.

Caster, on the other hand, is different from me, and it can be said that there are some activities that should be carried out within the mansion from the start. In the decisive battle on top of Tokyo Bay, the "Elixir" he completed refining helped Saber a lot. Even after the decisive battle, he still takes various magical steps to activate the Greater Grail. Although I'm not really sure this is necessary for my master, at least, our master has permitted all of his actions.

For example, this guest room. He has borrowed multiple guest rooms from her dear father, and is working hard at something here and there around the clock by using them as his personal workshop.

Assassin: "...... Is it a new familiar?"

Caster: "Yes."

Caster nods.

I had already sensed what was hidden in the darkness of the unlit guest room.

Something is there.

It is an existence that is deeply connected to mana like us, but it is not a Servant. I sense an unusually high mana, but something is off. It is not a Phantasmal Species. Is it the faint scent of Jasmine being used to cover up the putrid dead odour drifting from its body?

It was an unusual way of life.

I know it.

It is not the knowledge received from the Grail, I, know this as Hassan-i Sabbah.

A filthy thing that should not exist.

A repulsive life-threatening thing.

Is it a type of disgusting ghoul———?

Assassin: "Will a corpse be useful to our master in this situation?"

Caster: "It's not for Lady Manaka. This is a gift for you, Assassin."

Assassin: "What?"

Caster: "This is the most suitable thing for you on earth."

And then, he told me.

Caster: "----You are not suited to be Lady Manaka's servant."

Caster: "Thus, this gift. Is for a pitiful poison girl."

Assassin: "..... Is that all you want to say!?"

Is that it?

As the last of his words melt into the shadows, I exhale quietly.

That said, I'll do it to the extent of shredding his good-looking face.

You don't mind, Magus?

I ask him with a glance.

There was no reply.

He simply replies with only cold words.

Caster: "It's the perfect gift for you. It doesn't have to be Lady Manaka, right? Anyone who doesn't die from your touch will do for you. Am I wrong, Hassan of the Serenity?"

While being called out by my true name, sure enough, I see it.

The thing that appeared from the darkness.

A walking corpse.

A lifeless person.

Caster: "I gave it a temporary life. Normally, certain kinds of Living Dead need a certain amount of time and chronology to gain an ethereal brain.....but, what if the level of the Item Construction skill I possess as a Heroic Spirit is irregular, then something like this is......"

Assassin: "No...."

It can't be.

It simply can't be.

No, I killed him. I killed him.

How?

Caster: "Rebirth from death. A pseudo-resurrection. By using my "Philosopher's Stone" which I created with my own hands, it is possible to temporarily stave off death. It's a pity that the brain is useless like this time, but there is a way to bestow it with the memory of its life."

Assassin: "Why?"

Caster: "Because, it's for your sake. You should learn what your love really is."

Assassin: "M-my love.....?"

His voice

It's a lie, there's no way this shrill sound can come out from my throat.

Even if his performance was a trap to sink his fangs into his prey, I have never made such a shrill voice.

Ah.

Ahh.

The one in front of me is.....

It was the one that I killed.
That day. That night. That time.
On the top floor of a mansion in the Suginami Ward, Tokyo.
I hugged him.
I placed my lips on him.
He who should have had his brain melted and been completely killed by me.
Berserker's Master.
The owner of a shining red mystic eye of stillness. That young man.
What was his name?
Tatsumi: "Wh-OARE, you?"
He moves his pale lips—————
A screechy-like voice is squeezed out of his dead and stiff throat.
Tatsumi: "N-NO I DON"Twant TO, kILLyou."
His cloudy eyes
were looking at me.
There was something that couldn't live in the dead in them.
A blood-sucking species. Really? I don't understand. I don't understand! No, my mind broke. I
that's the case, no, but he is definitely here, he is here, it must be him.
After all, look.
I can hear him.
I can understand him.
He was telling me the continuation of his words from that night .
—————I open my eyes wide and stand there frozen.
Caster: "Ah, as I expected. I thought you'd be pleased with it. This gift is most suitable for you, why, because no matter what poison he receives, he will not be killed. Your poison is certainly powerful and can even kill higher Phantasmal Speciesbut that's not true for corpses."

I can hear his icy voice. From right behind me.

Caster: "Now. Please caress him to	our heart's content. After all, there's no one to stop you now,
no one"	



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Dear Tatsumi,
Are you well?
Mama is worried.
It's fine if it's by phone, but please contact us.
It doesn't even have to be a phone call.
I'm also worried.
What's happened to you?
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(An excerpt from a letter addressed to Tatsumi Kitano)



Tamaki: "Hey, big brother."

Right—

It was when I called out to my brother.

It doesn't seem like it was that long ago. But it was long, long ago.

I believe I was in the middle of walking home along the Maruko River which was unusual for me as I rarely go out and play. We walked side by side, holding hands, to a two-storey single house that was very close to the apartment where my brother currently lives.

Back then, I was smaller and shorter than a kid of the same age. And above all else, cowardly. I'd play by myself and rarely go to a friend's house, so I always tagged along with my brother wherever he went.

Yeah, That's right.

I was always searching for my brother's figure.

When I couldn't see him, I'd cry in large drops. Then, my brother would come running to me immediately.

On the way back, we'd always hold hands and walked.

My brother didn't show any sign that he hated it and when he held my hand, I hold it back tightly. At the time, I wasn't one to talk a lot, so on the way home, my brother usually talked about something and I usually just said "Yeah" and nodded.

Every day was like that.

I remember it well.

Of these, it's clear that the one I have the clearest memory of, I guess, was that day. That time.

Tamaki: "When Nori did that bad thing earlier...."

On the way home after playing with my brother's classmate Norimitsu. At that time, when I was watching my favourite Friday night anime, there ran a lot of CMs for movies with zombies with special make-up — I think such horror movies were popular, and perhaps — I was completely freaked out by them. So, it was the same on that day. It was a silly child's game of make-believe. But even so, I was scared from the bottom of my heart. The bad guy, Norimitsu was a mysterious person, who tried to carry out a terrifying plan to turn all the tap water across Tokyo into poison. My older brother was the hero of justice. A cyborg who fights bad guys or something like that. And I was almost always the hostage whenever we played like this. Tamaki: "Hey, I'm a tiny bit scared." The words I whispered to my brother. It wasn't a tiny bit. I was really really scared. After all, if the water flowing in our water supply was really poisonous, everyone would die. Mama and Papa. Our dog, Chibi, who we owned at that time. My kindergarten classmates, my teacher, everyone. Everyone. The people I love would have died. I imagined that scene. I was trembling when we were walking home after playing. Even though it wasn't cold. The words that Norimitsu said as his laughed, "I'll kill everyone," "No one can save you," pierced me deeply at that time and I was helplessly scared. He wasn't the usual Norimitsu, who is good at dodgeball and stinks at video games. The guy who captured me and didn't let go was definitely a bad guy at the moment. That's why. I was scared. Scared. Tamaki: "But only a little, okay." As I said this, I squeezed my brother's hand. Tamaki: "But, because you were with me, I wasn't scared." Half lie. Half-truth.

I knew that my brother would save me, so I just endured it until the game of make-believe was over.

Because I knew that on the way home, we would hold hands like this.

Tatsumi: "Oh, so that's it? So you weren't scared after all."

I think my brother probably noticed my lie. But without saying anything more than that.

He laughed.

It's okay, I have nothing to worry about————yes, he was telling me with his facial expression.



In her brother's apartment—————

After placing the note on his study desk, she was pointlessly petrified for a few minutes.

After thinking for a moment, Tamaki Kitano took action.

Contact the Police. No.

Contact her parent's house. No.

Certainly, my brother was in this room at least within the few days. Tamaki thought the room which was full of life truly seemed to be waiting for the owner of the room to return, and that he definitely would be home soon.

She decided to think.

It might not have been the best course of action.

Still, Tamaki decided to do what she could.

She briefly left the apartment and went to a nearby supermarket that was open until 22:00 pm at night, purchased ingredients, all the while barely returning a smile at the silly words from the middle-aged woman at the counter who said "Oh, it's been a while" and "How's your mother and father been doing?"

As anticipated, she started cooking instead of depending on the mostly empty refrigerator.

Braised¹⁰ burdock root with boiled spinach in bonito-flavoured soy sauce.

Dark-brown miso soup with freshwater clams.

Cooked rice that seemed to have been sent from her parent's house.

Stir fried vegetables with lots of pork that is spicy, has a strong flavour and a plentiful amount of it.

¹⁰ Kinpira: is a Japanese cooking style that can be summarized as a technique of "sauté and simmer". Similar to braising, (Source: Wikipedia).

After that, she grilled her brother's favourite fish. Japanese Spanish Mackerel. Literally, a spring fish. The air was still cold, but spring was coming soon.

Tamaki: "There. It's ready."

Tamaki thought, 'this dinner was well made, if I do say so myself.'

It was not as sophisticated as the meals she made when she regularly helped out her mother.

Tamaki: ""I asked my cute little sister to make this much, and yet, I would've preferred curry," if he says something like that, I'll send him flying."

By the time she had finished cooking, the sun had set and it was night.

By then, she finally noticed, so she used the phone in the room to call her home in

Tamaki: "...... Yeah. I'm gonna try and wait a bit longer."

On the other side of the line, her mother's worries were about to reach their peak.

She was supposed to contact her at 15:00, but she was side-tracked for a few hours, so it couldn't be helped. As she apologised, her mother somehow managed to calm down. It's alright. Sure, he was not in the room, but she didn't think he had been away for a long time, so she was sure he will be back soon.

"I'll stay here today, for now, and see what happens tomorrow."

She told her.

Tamaki: "Please don't cry, Mama. It's alright."

She hangs up the phone.

"Phew," she exhales briefly. Its white.

Now that she mentioned it, she forgot to turn on the heating. With this, the dishes she had taken great pains to make and lined up on the table will cool down in a blink of an eye. The dishes.

Thus, while it was still steaming piping hot.

They will eat it together.

She will make him say it is delicious no matter what.

After that, she will grill him as to why he was away from home until he was absent from school.

Tamaki: "......Ah......could it be, he's hanging out with his girlfriend, or something like that?" After saying it out loud, she thinks that it's unlikely. Tamaki: "Guess not." No matter how many times she came over, her brother didn't change. Even though his back was rapidly stretching, his physique was quickly getting more impressive, and he was growing so tall that he was about surpass his father's height someday, her brother had a look of no self-confidence on his face when it came to girls. Tamaki: "You're good-looking because you look like me. You can stand to be a little more confident." It was her soliloquy. Waiting for her switched-on electric heater to warm up, she stands up and rubs her hands, while exhaling her pure white breath. Was it better to keep her duffle coat on, aside from her muffler, until the air in the room heats up? As she tries to reach for her coat on the wall, she suddenly stops. Next to her coat. Was the top and bottom of a black school uniform hung on the wall with a hanger. A black faceless humanoid that exactly matches her brother's physique. Tamaki: "...... Where did you go, brother?" With a light pow. She threw one light punch. -But she only got an unreliable response from the empty school uniform. Aside from that. Nothing.